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Editorial

This issue of the Journal contains mainly some of the papers presented at the Seminar organized by the Faculty of Philosophy of Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram (DVK), Bangalore on "Philosophical Education in the Christian Institutes of India" in September 2002. As these essays very strongly advocate, a rethinking of the content of philosophical education and methodology of teaching is urgent and imperative. Philosophy should become more context-sensitive; it should try to answer issues raised by science, societal scenario of today's human life, political and cultural ideologies, etc. The objectives of philosophizing should be redefined. Philosophizing should involve not only head and intellect, but also heart and senses. Philosophy should transcend the confines of love of wisdom, and should become more and more oriented to love of humans and love of nature.

I thank very cordially the contributors. These and other essays presented at the Seminar will be published shortly in book form.

Chief Editor

SEMINAR ON PHILOSOPHICAL EDUCATION IN SEMINARIES: PROSPECTS AND PERSPECTIVES

Stanislaus Swamikannu*

Just to Conclude

Socrates was a threat! He chose to stand by his convictions and was willing to die for them! This simple historical fact, reflected in its depth, can guide our discussions for the coming days. Why was he a threat? There is no easy answer to this question. Our only guess is that he was a person context-sensitive and close to his people and history. Unfortunately he was made into a Shaman and his thoughts were canonized. The person and his thoughts were removed from their context and fossilized! This was the beginning of an empty repetition! Plato, his illustrious student, was the first to take distance from him and thus becoming a counter-culture to his own mentor! Plato was soon transformed into a symbolic figure of Greek wisdom. Very soon, the same Plato would be canonized. The sorry result of this has been beautifully summarized by Alfred North Whitehead, saying that, "The whole of Western Philosophy can be seen as a footnote to Plato."

Repetition marks the beginning of robbing an idea of its explosive and counter-cultural potentiality. It marks the beginning of an idea being converted into an opinion. This has been the fate shared by Socrates and Plato. It has also been the plight of every philosopher and every philosophy. Our teaching of philosophy in the seminaries is a faded version of this drama.

In the introductory note to the brochure of the seminar, we read, "There are, however, persistent complaints about the study-programme of philosophy in seminaries, and it definitely stands in need of revision both in content and method of teaching." The problem presented is very clear, but is not anything new. It is as old as philosophy itself. However, dissatisfaction or a discontent of this sort is healthy indeed.

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We can approach this discontent in an academic fashion! We can propose equally valid academic solutions like: we must re-write the history of philosophy from a global and intercultural perspective; we should give due importance to Asian philosophies; we should integrate some relevant themes like Hindutva, IT supremacy, globalization, gender justice, dalits and ecological awareness; reduce the importance of western philosophy; make philosophy context-sensitive, etc. I am afraid that it will turn out to be another document that can be quoted (repeated?). We can publish another book and get it easily sponsored by some foreign agency.

There is another response possible. An existential one! We need to allow philosophy to emerge from our sincere commitment to the target group. Such a philosophy will not just be abstract and neutral, instead it will be context-sensitive or concrete. It would be the conscience and voice of the deepest aspirations of the people. Producing a document in this response will be difficult. It will be hardly quoted! But it will become a threat! It would lead to more commitment. It would help us continuously reorient ourselves.

I intend to direct my reflections, for whatever they are worth, to the latter response to the discontent we all feel regarding the teaching and study of philosophy in the seminaries.

1. Let us go back to the People (the Reality)

We do not accuse the past for what they did. In all wisdom, they established our study centers far removed from the people to give the candidates the needed quiet and leisure to do philosophy. We have been insisting on the need to sped uninterrupted quality time for research. The seminaries have apportioned their time in such a way that the pastoral engagements would not tamper with the curriculum. We encouraged reading and writing.

We, as professors of philosophy, have spent long years either abroad or in India in the libraries. We have managed to challenge our western counterparts learning and using their own methodology, either using it against them or defending their positions better than they can. Thousands of scientific papers and books have seen the light of day. We ca take legitimate pride in our achievements. Our seminaries are better equipped

by way of infrastructure and personnel than many of the ancient and famous university departments of philosophy. The content of our programme of philosophy is far superior to the programmes offered by the secular institutes of philosophy.

Has such a study and teaching of philosophy formed our personalities? Has it given us a vision of life and engagements? The discontent seems to imply that it has not. The first and the most fundamental corrective we need in our education of philosophy in the seminaries are to go back to the people. Their anxieties and worries, their joys and sorrows and in short, their life struggles should become to base and the matter for philosophizing. We need to convince ourselves, that we have to spend twice as much time, if not more, with the people as we have spent in the libraries with books. What will emerge as a result of this engagement is yet to be awaited. It will not be a scientific work. It will certainly be an expression of the life of the people.

2. More passion and less Scientific Tone in our Research

An overemphasis on rules and regulations can kill the spirit. That a methodology is a must is granted. However, our insistence of methodology has made our seminarians produce methodologically perfect papers with hardly any contribution of their own. We have killed the spirit for the sake of a methodology. There is no passion and commitment. They are mostly repletion of the ideas of the authors with some useful conjunctions and interpretations. A layman will find it very difficult to understand this strange exercise in learning!

Unless and until I get passionately involved in the subject and the lives of the people, there will not be any passion in my study and research. I will make a thorough study of the subject. But there will be very little of my involvement. Passion is the result of that which becomes part of us, for which we will be ready to give even our lives. Will a scientific paper on the misery of the poor change my life style? But an involvement in the struggle of the people certainly will. A well-organized seminar on globalization and its evil effects conclude in a sumptuous meal at a five-star hotel! Another seminar on tribal welfare was organized at an ultra-modern setting! It is a real parody!

3. A Move from Contextualization Study to Becoming Context-sensitive Persons

Contextualization of any problem turns out to be an intellectual enterprise. I can delineate the context using certain parameters or grids worked out by some experts. I can apply them and make my study appear very concrete and contextulized. Let me take the example of the teaching of Indian philosophy in our seminaries. Allow me to make this generalization. After having looked at some 16 different Handbooks of seminaries and going through their syllabi, I was pleasantly surprised about the importance give to the teaching of Indian philosophy. However, when we look into the situation closely, what one recognizes is, that. Aristotle and Plato have without much difficulty been replaced by Sankara and Ramanuja, without any of them affecting our understanding of God, man, life and the world. The Western history of philosophy is replaced by the Indian history of philosophy. The change is welcome. But having no relevance to the life and problems of the people.

Instead, we need to become context-sensitive in our study of problems. We have to identify ourselves with the situation. One has to allow himself/herself to be touched by the culture and life of the people. Getting rooted in one's own culture and language of the people will equip the person to speak a language that is context-sensitive. The language of 'they' and 'them' will have to give way to 'we' and 'ours'. Only a context-sensitive Contextualization can make our studies meaningful and enriching.

4. From Thinking about Problems to Allowing Problems to Change our Thinking.

It has become customary to speak about a philosophy of power, philosophy of sports, philosophy of God. Philosophy of Nature, philosophy of Mar, philosophy of ethics, philosophy of economics, etc. The term philosophy in these phrase has given us a clear but reductive meaning of what philosophy is, i.e., 'thinking' or 'reasoning' or 'a discourse'. While this meaning is not completely wrong, it has to a great extend restricted the role of philosophy to just thinking. Because of this reduction, a philosopher can look at a problem with coldness and distance.

It is time that we allow problems to affect our thinking. At the face of glaring injustice, inhuman acts of violence, untold misery, etc., I cannot afford to think comfortably. It is even inhuman to think about them that way. Instead, it requires an involved response, which blends the heart and the head. Some of these problems, which can and should become 'contrast experience' demand a response, which need not be absolute and universal. However, they need to affect my thinking in some way. For a moment, I should only stand in silence, without words to express my feelings. I may not have anything to say. I might, with faltering steps, attempt a response. They are more philosophical than to put on them some readymade conceptual framework, which would do violence to their seriousness. In other words, let the problems speak and transform your thinking. We need only to be open and sensitive.

5. Philosophy does not Mirror Reality; it Critically Responds

One of the most disturbing realities of today's Indian scenario is the all too human phenomenon of divisions on the basis of caste, religion, rites, language, place of origin, etc. The church, in its human form, has too easily succumbed to this reality. This has assumed alarming proportions at all levels. The formators cannot take disciplinary actions against seminaries, lest, they be criticized by their respective linguistic and communal support groups consisting mainly of priest. There are dioceses and religious congregation that select vocations only from a particular area or a caste.

One is reminded of Freud's Civilization and its Discontents. In this work, he rightly points out the most disquieting paradox of Modern age/civilization as 'the narcissism of minor differences.' The idea of narcissism of minor differences refers to the ways in which insignificant difference among people, who are otherwise alike, form the basis of 'feelings of strangeness and hostility between them.' Freud's concept is primarily useful to explain why in modern civilization violent and genocidal struggles have take place among peoples in our own country, who are distinguished more by what they share than their radical differences. It is rightly expressed by Michael Igantieff that 'in many contemporary nationalist genocides, when 'real differences between groups diminished, symbolic and imagined differences become more salient.' In this context.

6. Philosophy Integrates but Avoids Policing

Traditionally the study of philosophy was encouraged, because philosophy was considered as the handmaid of theology. The church documents, both past and present, have constantly been reiterating this view. While we don't deny this role to philosophy, the entire study of philosophy cannot be reduced to that! It provides the student with a comprehensive worldview, which directs his course of action in the ethical, social and religious fields.

We need to repeatedly emphasize the importance of philosophy for the integral growth of a person! The role of philosophy in integrating fragmented spheres knowledge must be brought into clear focus. Modern age ushered in a need for delving deep into certain aspects of reality that needed attention. While this has been a boon for many areas otherwise neglected, it has equally been proved to be a bane for an integrated view on reality as a whole. This has led to enormous consequences: a certain ethical neutrality in doing research in the field of medicine; the materialistic understanding of the human person, thus reducing him to being one dimensional man; scientism; naturalism; traditionalist, secularism, etc. We need to recapture the original intention of this fragmentation of knowledge: for a better and deeper understanding of a particular aspect of reality in order to enhance our grasp of reality as a whole.

However, the role of integrating and synthesizing does not guarantee philosophy a role of policing in the field of research. It is true that every attempt at synthesis involves an implicit interpretation and checking; but philosophy need not entertain the desire for totality and absolute truth. It is beyond the reach of any one science.

7. Crossing the Boundaries

Human as we are, we feel safe when we know what our boundaries are. It gives us the feeling of being at home. We rarely experiment with food and other habits. Even in a far away place, we feel comfortable with some Indian food. The same holds for our style of dressing, language and custom. This is not totally different in the area of our thinking. We feel at ease with certain ways of thinking and reasoning. How difficult it is to

wish goodbye to the dualism of Plato. We have come to think that it is impossible to do otherwise. Such an attitude can lead us unconsciously to a ghetto or a closed mentality. Our involvement and our being part of a situation of not make us context-bound but context-sensitive. Context-sensitive people have no fear of crossing the boundaries. Their being rooted in their own culture and people makes them universal. This has been the experience of every philosopher. Any philosophical tradition is just an ensemble. It doe not have a pure an virginal beginning. It is a hybrid sedimentation, where numerous traditions and sub-traditions crisscross, where the boundaries overflow. We cannot think of any tradition as a unified and monolithic phenomenon. Such a realization makes us broadminded people, who are willing to learn, dialogue and share fundamentalism is the outcome of an opposite attitude. In a multicultural country like India, it is imperative that we avoid straightjacket thinking which would makes us less sensitive to the feelings of others.

8. From conceptual Perspectives to a Single Lived Option

It is self-evident that one has as many perspective as the standpoint from which he/she approaches an issues. One can have thousands of such perspectives at the theoretical level without violating the rules of logic. However, it is nearly impossible to have many perspectives when it is a question of living and option.

There is a powerful example in the life of Jesus. His thinking can be interpreted to suit any one's need and convenience. But, his life thinking and activities reveal a perspective, which is clear. His single-minded commitment to the poor and the oppressed, the marginalized and the outcastes, summarized his life and activities. Christians can have different perspectives at the conceptual level to clarify ideas. But when it comes to a lived option, their conceptual perspectives are synthesized or focused. The different perspectives are not denied, but elevated to a synthesis, which only lived experience can give. It is also only in the lived option for a particular cause that a person can transcend boundaries set by the cultures. In the life of Jesus, we have such an example. In the healing of Simon's mother-in-law on the Sabbath, in healing the leper, in calling a tax collector as his disciple, in eating with sinners, one sees Jesus crossing the boundaries set by the Jewish law. But, in his lived option for the socially,

culturally and religiously marginalized, Jesus sees the boundaries vanish. He could even re-define the boundaries from the perspective of his liberating experience of God as abba. This has been the experience of great thinkers.

9. The Subaltern Perspective as the Christian Lived Option

It is true that we live in a multicultural society. We have a plethora of views based on religion and culture. There is ambiguity all around. There is even the possibility of indecision and delay in our response to situations, which are complex. This is no way deters us from choosing a perspective for doing philosophy. The ambiguity and plurality that characterize our society does not lead us to inaction, but it is a fresh opportunity for doing philosophy in a more meaningful way. They question the familiar, and challenge us to take the road les traveled.

There is a clarion call re-define our priorities in doing philosophy. We are given unambiguous signals to take the side of the poor and the marginalized. We cannot pretend not to understand this call within a call to be philosophers. The cry of the poor and the consciousness of the subaltern groups should direct our syllabi, our method of teaching, in short, our world view. Are we arbitrary in our choice of the perspective? so be it! what is otherwise the purpose of constructing the most sophisticated libraries, spending a lifetime in research, learning and teaching philosophy? Is the goal of teaching philosophy in our seminaries meant to produce scholars whose works can compete with those our counterparts in other part of the globe? Let us not forget that scholars are only admired!

Let me start my keynote address afresh...

Philosophy is not 'love of wisdom.,' as the literal meaning would have us believe! That is too cozy a definition! It is sincere involvement motivated by love for the less fortunate! Thus, you are bound to become a threat!

SCIENCE, PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

Jose Thadavanal[♦]

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is a wonderful work, which, although four centuries old, still inspires modern humans in many ways. One particular incident in that work provides the insight for the introductory remark I would like to make. Hamlet's father, the King of Denmark, is no more. The prince is in deep grief and utter despair over the loss of his father. He has almost lost his mental balance; he behaves rather oddly. Surely the prince has gone mad, said many. But Polonius didn't quite agree with the rest of the folks. He said gently, but firmly, about Hamlet's queer behaviour: "Though this be madness, yet there is method in it."

Even madness is tolerable, and even appreciable, if there is *method* in it. The emphasis on employing *advanced methodology* in the search for knowledge is a characteristic of the *advanced modern mind*. It is reflective of the transition from the *pre-scientific* to the *scientific* era. Throughout history humankind has constantly and persistently strived to perfect more advanced methods and techniques of inquiry. In this process the old, "lame" methods of inquiry were gradually discarded and more reliable methods were adopted. In other words, in today's world it is generally accepted that only *disciplined inquiry* or *scientific inquiry* can give us valid, reliable knowledge. Disciplined inquiry is inquiry conducted with the *scientific attitude* and which employs the *scientific method*.

Seminary education has a number of short and long term objectives. Important among these are the imparting of training in the search for knowledge and truth, and the equipping of students with the necessary knowledge and skill to serve humanity. My argument is that the traditional methodology employed and the traditional disciplines taught may often prove to be inadequate in attaining these objectives in the present socio-cultural and intellectual milieu. It is time we realized that in the modern world there are other methods and other disciplines that are equally or even more qualified to accomplish the above goals. It is also argued that pastoral ministry, priestly and religious formation, and providing leadership to laity in socio-cultural, educational, and other intellectual fields are important areas of the church's ministry, and that the new methods and the new disciplines can make a significant contribution in this regard.

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The training of the seminarians must be such that we create in these young minds a passion to know truth through *disciplined inquiry*, and the courage to live that truth. Particularly in the Indian context, people live in the midst of ignorance and a multitude of superstitions, unhealthy customs, and traditions. The seminarian must be convinced that falsification or distortion of facts cannot hold ground for long. One cannot fool the people forever. Sentimental attachments or personal bias should not stand in the way of acquiring true knowledge. The urge to free oneself from falsehood and ignorance, and the passionate seeking after true knowledge must be kindled in the heart of every seminarian. They in turn will implant these in the hearts of the people they are asked to take care of during their ministry in the future as pastors and formators.

I can foresee the reaction of those who handle traditional subjects. Their rejoinder will surely include an emphatic and uncompromising reference to the transcendental nature of human beings and the ultimate reality. Without denying this key dimension, it should, at the same time, be also noted that modern human beings' major concerns are revolving not around some extra-mundane, philosophical issues, but around the concrete problems of their very existence in this world. Moreover, most people believe that the "transcendentalists" have nothing *new* to offer; their writings merely echo what others before them have already said, centuries ago. The bottles are new and the labels are attractive, but the content is the same old stuff.

The breath-taking progress in the modern world has brought about a tremendous change in human beings' attitudes and values systems. The *scientific attitude* and the *scientific method* have replaced the traditional attitudes and traditional methods. Speculation and insight, blind faith, appeal to authority and tradition are no more acceptable to modern humans as *methods* or means to gain knowledge because none of these can claim to be methods of *disciplined inquiry*. Disciplined inquiry alone can gather data systematically, formulate hypotheses and verify them, and formulate theories. Knowledge gathered through disciplined inquiry or the application of the scientific method enjoys many advantages. In this method, for instance, variables can be *controlled*, data can be treated *statistically*, and the study or experiment itself is *repeatable*.

The controlling of variables is a vital aspect of any disciplined inquiry. Answers that are the fruit of mere armchair speculation may not enlighten us always; these answers may be lacking in objectivity and credibility. The

particular conditioning that the speculative thinker/author has been subjected to, his/her own personal bias, the bias of his/her own culture, religion, and class may all influence him/her in the formation of his/her views. Through the manipulation of the relevant variables we can eliminate the grounds of many faulty assumptions. Thus we can objectively show that the variation in such and such a dependent variable is the result of variations in such and such independent variables. Thus through the proper controlling of variables it can be convincingly shown that the backwardness of the lower castes in India or the blacks in the U.S. is the result of generations of social, economical, and educational discrimination and deprivation. A scholar in Indian philosophy who knows the use of nothing but the speculative method based on the scriptures and the pronouncements of ancient authorities may still parade all sorts of arguments to prove the veracity of the age-old beliefs and practices. In fact, the scientific method of controlling the variables can be used in identifying the causes of many a phenomenon that has baffled and misled humanity for centuries.

Quantification and the statistical treatment of data have become today part and parcel of the method of disciplined inquiry. Sweeping generalizations often reflect the bias and/or ignorance of the author. Measurement and quantification, on the other hand, establish facts undisputably. An investigator whose method to know truth is disciplined inquiry, cannot proceed without resorting to measurement and statistical analysis.

Repeatability, or the "check-up-ability"—as James B. Conant, the distinguished scientist and former president of Harvard University, calls it—is one of the most striking characteristics of a fact or theory established through disciplined or scientific inquiry. In most cases the scientific study or experiment can be repeated by others. That is to say, other investigators can repeat the study and check-up its veracity by following the same plan and procedure and employing the same tools or materials. Thus the veracity of a scientific fact established can be tested throughout the world and for years to come. Sometimes, as a result of such extensive and rigorous re-testing, established facts and theories have been successfully challenged and new theories have been introduced. Unlike in the case of speculative insights, the dethroning of an old theory has never been thought of as a humiliation or loss to someone or something. Rather, it would be hailed as a giant leap for humankind. In the "kingdom" of speculative thought, there will be a number of the so-called "authorities" around whom gathers a bunch of committed disciples, each school straining every nerve to show that its system alone is

the embodiment of absolute truth. Since "truth" is relative here, there arises rivalry between schools or systems. In the "kingdom" of disciplined inquiry, on the other hand, a scientifically established fact becomes the common property of humanity, and everyone rejoices in the common achievement of the human race. Hence there does not arise any rivalry, nor is there any need for arguments and counter-arguments.

Human knowledge, in order to be valid, must be verifiable. One reason why modern branches of knowledge like physics, chemistry, biology, medicine, engineering and astrophysics have made tremendous progress is that they have accumulated a large amount of verified knowledge. The major reason why philosophy, although much older than these sciences, has not made a comparable progress is that it depended solely on the method of armchair speculation and deriving insights from these speculations. These insights are, in fact, nothing more than *hypotheses* in the hands of those who make disciplined inquiry. These hypotheses need to be tested and proved. A group of philosophers, becoming fully aware of this "lame duck" nature of philosophy, earnestly attempted to make philosophy more scientific. The result was the innovation in philosophy called *Analytic Philosophy*. But even analytic philosophy could not redeem philosophy. Analytic philosophy started off as a way of moving from speculation to science—from philosophy as an historically based discipline to philosophy as a discipline centering around "logical analysis." However, this attempt failed as the notion of "logical analysis" and its purportedly "scientific" vocabulary turned upon itself as it failed to deliver the goods, and committed slow suicide. Some philosophy departments in the scientifically-minded United States, which had got disillusioned with the unscientific speculative method of traditional philosophy, adopted analytic philosophy as their torch-bearer and "redeemer," but this experiment also miserably failed.

Early humans' cognitive system was pre-scientific, easily susceptible to suggestion, and so superstitious. Human beings then lived in ignorance, confusion, and darkness. Thus philosophers in the past have wasted much time and energy trying to give answers to questions which baffled them, trying to resolve matters which were great issues for them but are non-issues today. Does the visible world really exist or not? Can we ever know the world? Is empirical perception reliable and valid? These are some of the "mighty" questions of the past with which great philosophers wrestled. But as everyone today knows, in the "Brave New World" of ours these questions are not even worth-considering; the existence of the world, human beings' ability to perceive the world through their senses and through the extension

of their senses, viz., scientific devices like microscopes, telescopes, thermometers, etc., and the validity of empirical perception are taken for granted. Disciplined inquiry always depends upon knowledge gathered through the sense organs. In other words, modern humans' agenda is different. The question is no more "*Whether* we can know the world" but "How can we know the world (and humans) *better*?"

We should also change our step-motherly attitude towards the sciences, including the behavioural sciences. Antagonism toward science as a source of valid knowledge stems perhaps from the unconscious acceptance of inferiority and the unconscious fear of defeat and loss of power before a powerful "foe." Science is never anti-morality or anti-humanity. The goal of all disciplined inquiry or science is the *acquisition* and *dissemination* of *knowledge*. Admittedly, knowledge is good in itself. Sometimes knowledge may *appear* to be a bad or harmful thing. This is not because knowledge in itself is a bad thing but because it has reached the wrong hands, and evil people make use of it to achieve their evil aims. A jet aircraft, although of immense benefit to humanity, can nevertheless become a deadly missile in the hands of a terrorist. Blindly criticizing modern knowledge, therefore, must be viewed as uncharitable, hypocritical, and prejudicial. Here one seems to uphold the slogan that "It is better not to know than to know." In science, on the contrary, the basic faith is that "It is better to know than not to know." Philosophy is unable to compete with science as a source of modern knowledge, because its adopting of a faulty, lame method—the speculative method—has prevented it from acquiring modern knowledge which is objective and verifiable. The mission of the modern researcher is to seek knowledge *actively* and disseminate it *aggressively*. Through disseminating the knowledge he has gained, a scientist both exposes it for public scrutiny and dedicates it to humanity for the benefit of everyone. Since knowledge is better than ignorance, knowledge itself is value. Disciplined inquiry, by all means and everywhere, removes the evil of ignorance and false knowledge and promulgates genuine values. If knowledge is a value, and if disciplined inquiry generates knowledge, then it follows that all elements, systems, or institutions that hinder or at least view with suspicion the knowledge acquired through disciplined inquiry, must be deemed as not interested in the pursuit of truth and the welfare of humanity. It must be admitted that philosophy and religious beliefs sometimes stand in the way of truth and real progress. One must be more than willing to abandon beliefs and positions in the face of contrary, incontrovertible evidence. In philosophy and religion one is supposed to *accept* the *error* if it comes from a great name and *reject*

the *true knowledge* advanced by an "insignificant" thinker. In disciplined inquiry, on the contrary, the name and fame of the author has nothing to do with the veracity of his findings; the crucial question will be whether the theory or findings rest on verified evidence. As disciplined inquiry alone can offer *social hope*, our students must be imbibed with the spirit of disciplined inquiry from the earliest days of their academic training.

One should concede that as far as human and natural phenomena are concerned, disciplines employing the method of speculation and insight are no longer serious candidates in the field of giving an explanation. The task of giving an explanation to these phenomena is completely taken over by science. In understanding the universe and all that is in it, supernatural explanations have no place today; it is the scientific explanations that illuminate us. For the modern human being, anything which is not based on evidence lacks credibility. Scientific theories, as they are based on publicly checkable evidence, have succeeded in winning the confidence of people. Religion and philosophy find their ideal in the apostles who wanted no evidence; but science and modern human beings hold up as their ideal Thomas who demanded evidence. In the speculative method, "truths" are established on the basis of private conviction or "intuition" or by appealing to authority. In disciplined inquiry, on the contrary, it is hard evidence that matters; private conviction or appealing to authority has no place there. Unless we take note of this change in modern human beings' attitude, we will be living in a fool's paradise.

As human beings are curious animals, they are impelled by the urge to know, the hunger for explanation. It is this great desire to know that gave birth to philosophy first and then to science. Now science and the scientific method have replaced philosophy and the speculative method as means to gain accurate, reliable knowledge. Unless this change is reflected in the seminary curriculum we will not be able to produce men and women capable of dealing with the sophisticated modern world. Here it should be born in mind that whatever is "modern" in modern philosophy and theology is produced by those "sophisticated" philosophers and theologians who had the courage and the patience to study the fruits of modern scientific research.

Sometimes, false doctrines offered by the speculative scholar may be very comforting to the believer. But our students should be taught that the "discomfort" of true knowledge is preferable to the "comfort" offered by false doctrines and private convictions. It is also true that some of the so-called scholars never want science to challenge their comforting doctrines

and prove their falsity. They never want people to discover the falsity of these doctrines and abandon them. But our motto should everywhere be: "Let truth prevail." The modern telescope and microscope, thus, have successfully exploded many a myth that humans upheld for centuries as valid explanations of natural phenomena. There is nothing wrong in telling the students that the awe-inspiring discoveries made with the help of the telescope and microscope are equally, or even more, revealing of the grandeur of the creator as the narration of miracles in the Old Testament or the mythologies of the Hindu Scriptures.

Yet I can foresee disagreements and objections here. Proponents of the traditional position will certainly argue that while disciplines following the speculative method make human beings aware of their own limitations and powerlessness and so aware of transcendental realities, those following the scientific method make, or are likely to make, humans feel self-sufficient, proud, arrogant, and devoid of the sense of transcendence and mystery. This view is not fully correct. A mother cannot expect the same ignorance and dependence from her adult son as she can expect from her infant son. It would be unwise to think that we can keep humanity at all times in its infancy level. As humanity evolves, its understanding of the ultimate reality, of the origin and nature of the universe and human beings, and its understanding of values also will evolve. One should admit that the new theologies and philosophies on God, heaven, human beings, personal and social values, and a variety of other things have appeared in the wake of new discoveries in the physical, biological, and social sciences.

Closed-mindedness is a danger, the development of which must be prevented at any cost. When students are not exposed to alternative worldviews, alternative methods of inquiry, and alternative perceptions of knowledge, closed-mindedness develops. A closed mind believes that it is in possession of absolute truth and that it has the exclusive possession of it. Religious fundamentalism and the education imparted in the madrasas will serve as typical examples here. A religious fundamentalist has a closed mind. His cognitive system is primitive, pre-scientific, and closed. To him the whole source of knowledge is religion, especially the scripture, and the utterances of his own fundamentalist leaders. As his rigidity in thought and perception does not allow him to expose himself to other sources of information other than the ones provided by his own leaders and scripture—the Vedas, the Koran, the Bible, the Torah—he persists in his ignorance and in his deviant experience. Intolerance of other people and other belief systems is deemed as a sign of authenticity and total commitment to one's

own faith. Any act, however inhuman or cruel it might be, when committed against the "enemy" becomes a holy act. As he sees it, extremism in defence of faith is a virtue; moderation in defence of faith is an act of omission and so a sin. Similarly, the education imparted in the madrasas is the most suitable one to produce a closed-minded person. The curriculum of these institutions is limited to instruction in the Koran and Islamic literature. (Incidentally, it is a welcome news that the government of Karnataka has recently decided to introduce forcibly in these institutions the teaching of mathematics and the sciences.) Unless students are given a training with a broader intellectual outlook, Catholic institutions too run the risk of producing anti-rational, closed-minded priests and religious year after year.

It should be clearly understood that we are no more training students of the dark Middle Ages but students who are supposed to live and work in the age of reason, the post-modern age of great science and great technology. The first to realize this fact was the secular universities themselves. They thoroughly revamped the college and university curricula, introducing more and more specialized, life-oriented courses in the place of the traditional subjects. The example of the secular universities should serve as an eye-opener to everyone concerned. Religion, philosophy, and poetry express truth only *symbolically*, which may or may not correspond with objective reality. In other words, they use the language of *metaphor*, which is often similar to a wild guess. But the modern human's mind will be satisfied with nothing less than precise, accurate, objective knowledge that has been tested and verified. Francis Bacon describes a case where an argument broke out among the friars of a certain community on the issue of the number of teeth in the mouth of horses. The argument raged for days and days; all the philosophical and theological tomes were examined, all the ancient authorities were quoted, but no solution emerged. Finally, one of the friars dashed straight to the stall, opened the mouths of horses, counted the number of teeth, and gave the definitive answer. This incident points to the superiority of the empirical method and disciplined inquiry in solving the "mysteries" of humans and nature which philosophy once attempted to do. Philosophy and religion often see nature as unreal or *maya* and as an *adversary*, but science sees nature as source of real knowledge and as *facilitator*. The preoccupation of today's human beings is not the question of how to understand the transcendental but the question of how to improve the quality of life. Today's ministers and formators must not lose sight of this shift that has come about in people's attitudes and concerns. The transition from the pre-scientific to the scientific era is an important milestone in the intellectual and socio-cultural progress of

humanity. Whatever "modernity" a modern philosopher can claim, and whatever it is that makes his philosophy different from the philosophy of his predecessors, is the result of his coming into contact with the knowledge that disciplined inquiry or science has produced and disseminated for the benefit of all humanity.

Of course the scientist does not, strictly speaking, claim to have direct or indirect knowledge of the ultimate reality. However, in the post-modern world of ours the quest for the knowledge of the ultimate reality forms only a small part of human beings' total quest for knowledge. Moreover, knowledge about the transcendental realities we already have in abundance; nor are we contributing anything new to this area. Only new explanations and fresh interpretations of what our "ancestors" have already said are possible now. Significant new discoveries or groundbreaking insights in the transcendental plane will be extremely rare to occur. This is especially the case with subjects like Indian philosophy. The ultimate meaning and purpose of existence is already made clear to humans; what they want now is the knowledge and the skill to tackle the manifold problems of existence, the ability to improve the *quality* of life in a concrete sense. The tragedy of philosophical education in the seminaries is that no serious attempt is being made to incorporate the fruits of modern knowledge in the curriculum, and for that reason philosophical education in the twenty-first century is mostly a replica of philosophical education in the nineteenth or early twentieth century.

I can guess the counter-arguments of those who still want to trek the beaten track. They are likely to point out the total chaos in the contemporary world and give apocalyptic warnings, arguing that all these are the result of the ignoring of the transcendental dimension and the placing of too much emphasis on material values. The great physicist Werner Heisenberg himself was acknowledging this fact when he observed that today man finds himself in the position of a captain whose ship has been so securely built of iron and steel that his compass no longer points to the north but only towards the ship's mass of iron. Philosophy and religion have so long tried to depict the inadvisability of an over-dependence on science, the scientific method, and the scientific attitude. Here we have to realize that the times have changed, and today not many would take seriously such warnings. It is better for us to come to terms with reality than behave like ostriches. While recognizing the limitations of science, we should also be humble enough to acknowledge the limitations of a blind faith. Today people prefer the certainty of the scientific method to the uncertainty and irrationality of the speculative method. Alfred

North Whitehead, as a scientist, cautions society against the proliferation of the symbolic and the metaphorical language. He says that the over-dependence on symbols, which have a tendency to run wild like the vegetation of a tropical forest, is a perilous thing. So also, the over-use of subjective opinions, symbols, and metaphors during the period of seminary training, I believe, will be an unwise thing. It will only end up in stifling the students' creativity and quest for objective knowledge. Only complacency and the urge to withdraw from the world of objective knowledge will be the result. That is why Whitehead advocates an occasional revolt against the over-use of symbolism. You may view the present paper also as part of this "occasional revolt" against the over-use of symbolism in seminaries. I am not arguing that philosophical speculations are mere "daytime reverie" or "idle fancy." My argument is that, because they employ the faulty method they are unable to supply the objective, advanced knowledge that people badly need today to tackle the innumerable problems of their daily life.

People employ different methods of inquiry during different stages of humanity's intellectual and cultural development. When more advanced methods are perfected, the older, less accurate methods are abandoned. The present age, honestly, belongs to the scientific method and the scientific attitude. The yearning for knowledge that is generated by disciplined inquiry must be seen as a concrete expression of the progress made by humankind. The New Spirit of Inquiry, which is associated with the Renaissance and which started in Europe as a reaction against scholastic thought and the speculative method of the philosophers, has today culminated in the development of the modern scientific method of inquiry, and it must be seen as an important stage in man's intellectual and cultural growth. Instead of depreciating this achievement of humanity, what we should do is to teach our students to see God working through human beings in all these amazing discoveries and be able to derive the ultimate metaphysical meaning behind these discoveries. The view that modern science promotes nothing but naïve materialism is too sweeping a remark. If properly interpreted and understood, the mysteries of nature that science unravels will only deepen one's faith in the Supreme Power behind all these marvels. In that sense, Einstein's famous equation, $E=mc^2$, may prove to be more potent than the description of miracles in the Old Testament or similar narratives in the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Instead of provoking a confrontation between science and faith, our task should be to strike a harmony between the two. Historically speaking, philosophy's sacred mission has always been to bring together human beings, nature, and the Supreme Being in a dynamic and sacred

synthesis; if properly interpreted and synthesized, modern scientific discoveries, including the new theories in the behavioural sciences, also can achieve the same objective. The advance of science and technology is irreversible and we now have to come to terms with ourselves in the new situation that we find ourselves in. Unless we develop a strategy to cope with this new situation in a meaningful and creative manner, we will find ourselves and our systems utterly irrelevant in a fast-progressing world.

With the second half of the twentieth century, human beings' pursuit of knowledge took a new turn. Gaining knowledge about themselves and the world around them, including the vast universe, became the major concern of humans. It involved the study of the human being's body, mind, social behaviour, and the rest of the natural world as it is of use/concern to humans. Thus subjects like mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology, and specialized areas like medicine, engineering, and computer science emerged as the major branches of knowledge in the modern world. Today the pursuit of knowledge is most intensely undertaken in these disciplines. At the second level emerged subjects like management, economics, commerce, political science, psychology, sociology, anthropology, etc. Philosophy and similar subjects, as sources of knowledge, were pushed to the periphery, and so these disciplines enjoy lesser status and demand today. These developments signify a change in human beings' attitudes and value systems. Today, as a source of knowledge men and women depend on those disciplines that depend on the scientific method, objectivity, quantification, verification, repeatability, and the other characteristics of science. The modern mind tends to accept anything that is scientific in nature and reject everything that is not scientific in nature. Naturally today's human beings, in their search for knowledge, are less inclined to look into philosophical tomes.

Defined then as "the study of the mind," psychology itself was originally part of the philosophical tradition. However, hard-headed men like John B. Watson, wanting to make psychology a science as objective and reliable as the natural sciences, revolted against all the mentalism and subjectivity in psychology, and eventually succeeded in making psychology a *science*—the *science* of *behaviour*. Today psychology is capable of *analysing* and *predicting* behaviour scientifically.

In short, the time for a paradigm clash and a paradigm change to occur has come. Our students should be trained to find the meaning of existence not by living in some abstract, non-existent, utopian dream-world, but by involving themselves in the actual problems of humanity—hunger, poverty,

illness, exploitation and oppression, injustice, violence and crime, anxiety and tension, the craving for the fulfilment of one's psychological needs, racial, communal, and linguistic tensions, bribery and corruption, and so on. In the handling of these and similar issues, again, merely gaining some knowledge from a secular university or college will not be sufficient. It is the teaching of the Christian approach and giving the students the right orientation that really matters. The Christian approach to these problems includes analysis of the problems from the Christian perspective and the development of solutions based on Christian values and principles. As far as current seminary education is concerned, the usefulness of the behavioural sciences is vastly underestimated. Today it is not uncommon among hard-core theologians and philosophers to view psychology as a "black sheep," as an "odd" newcomer, among seminary subjects. In their utter ignorance and prejudice some even speak of it as nothing but "nonsense" put in black and white. Here it must be remarked that only those who are out of touch with contemporary realities will adopt such a position. In this regard, the secular universities and colleges have shown us the way. Of late there has been a total revolution in organizing college and university curricula. Traditional subjects which were nothing more than a test of one's memory power are mostly discarded; in their place are introduced subjects that are utilitarian and heavily based on the fruits of modern scientific advances.

Any impartial observer would agree that insights derived from sound psychological principles have revolutionized people's understanding of almost everything that the Church deals with—God, human beings, society, body, mind, and sin. Psychology has been of tremendous influence in understanding the Bible, in formulating new guidelines in moral theology, in modifying the shape of religious life, and in shaping the new understanding of sexuality and marriage. Understanding the new discoveries in social, developmental, abnormal, and child psychology, theories of personality, guidance and counselling, learning, etc., will be of immense benefit in pastoral ministry, in formation, and in situations where leadership roles are involved. Today the principles of psychology are effectively utilized in almost every branch of knowledge and training—in education, in management, in medicine and healthcare, in social work, in criminology, in law, in childcare, and what not. Why should the education and training of the pastor, the formator, the superior, and the leader be an exception to this general trend?

THE ETHICAL PERSON
A Perspective of Critical Ontology

Joseph Kaipayil♦

Invitation

In my recent book, *Critical Ontology: An Introductory Essay* (2002), I proposed a new method of philosophizing called Critical Ontology. This paper is an attempt to understand the ethical person, using the method of critical ontology. The idea of the ethical person is chosen for discussion in the belief that it is the key to understanding morality and the task of moral philosophy. The ethical vision we present here is one legitimate interpretation we have arrived at by applying the method of critical ontology. There could possibly be other epistemically justifiable interpretations, which the same method can provide.

Moral philosophy is not so much about the good and bad of particular acts; rather it is about the moral vision that shapes our moral acts and judgements. One's vision of life fashions one's decisions and deeds. The Christian obligation to do charity, for example, comes from the Christian vision that all people are children of God and hence we need to love and care for humanity. The ethical vision is about the ethical person, who is both the agent and beneficiary of ethical actions. Our understanding of who the ethical person is will determine our relationships with other humans and society at large. Not only does it influence our attitudes to and actions with fellow-humans but also our moral respect for nature. Arguably, acting according to the philosophical vision of the ethical person brings meaning and satisfaction to one's own and other's life.

Critical Ontology

We use the qualifier "critical" in the Kantian sense of requiring knowledge, philosophical knowledge included, be founded on empirical experience. Critical ontology, however, is not sympathetic to Kant's agnosticism of metaphysics. Metaphysics is possible and productive, provided it is based on the analysis of the empirical. Metaphysical postulations must be rational postulations, resulting from our reflections on

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the world of experience. The human intellect wants to comprehend the object of its thought. This comprehension is possible only if we get a unified view of that object, and any unified view is possible only if we have the knowledge of the principles that make the given object, the principles which give it existence, identity and unity. This metaphysical passage from the empirical to the transcendent is possible due to the inherent epistemic dynamism (ability) of the human intellect to achieve new and further insights into reality.

The term ontology has mainly been used in two ways. Traditionally it means the study of being qua being. In the usage of Analytical Philosophy, however, it means the discussion of the kinds of objects that exist. We employ the term in a new way, signifying the study of being-principles. By being-principle we mean the constitutive principle of the given object. Every entity has its being-principle, accounting for its existence and nature. Each entity is unique in identity and action by virtue of its being-principle. Thus to know an entity ultimately means to know its being-principle. The being-principle of an entity remains at the core of that entity, permeating all layers of its existence. The being-principle brings the different layers of the object in question into existence and holds them together in unity, making that particular entity what it is. And it is only by passing through the different layers of the given entity that we come to the discovery of its being-principle.

Critical ontology proposes three heuristic (epistemic) steps to the discovery of being-principles. They are: experience, analysis and postulation. First, we have the experience of the given reality we choose to reflect upon. Here we identify (determine or settle on) the object of our philosophical reflection and our experience of it in its various aspects. Second, we critically analyse the data of our experience, using logical and mathematical categories, the methods and insights of natural and social sciences and any other available legitimate means of analysis. Ideas of other philosophers and philosophies could also be used. Third, from and based on the analysis of the empirical we make a rational postulation as to what the being-principle of the given entity is.

Once we gain the knowledge of the being-principle(s), critical ontology makes the fourth move – the return to the empirical. This move, together with the three moves discussed above, completes the circle of

knowledge. We return to the empirical with the insight or vision of the being-principle(s) for relevant action. Cognition is beginning of knowledge and action is completion of knowledge.

The Ethical

Ethics is part of our every-day experience. We hear people discuss the good and bad of human actions. We ourselves often take part in the talk about morality. Sometimes we need to make judgements about the right and wrong of our own and other's deeds. There could be situations where we are confused as to which course of action we are to morally opt. Of course, reason plays an important role in our moral perceptions and judgements. As rational beings we use reason to find the good and bad of actions. We choose what is rationally (reasonably) good for us and we are justified in our choice. But reason alone cannot be made the criterion of morality. Rationality can become susceptible to self-interest and may lead to moral relativism. We can have rationality for egoism, for example. So we have to look for another condition that makes one's rationality a moral rationality. To find such a criterion of morality and moral justification, we should consider the kind of values the society endorses and the norms it generally makes to guide people in their social living. We choose modern liberal democracy for analysis.

Society did undergo various changes until it reached the present level of liberal democracy. Arguably, it is presently the best available form of political society. A liberal democracy is one that upholds people's right to self-determination in political governance, approves of cultural pluralism and guarantees fundamental human rights and personal freedoms. The liberal democracy is the result of people's self-consciousness that the individual human being is important and the political value is to promote human wellbeing. The political structure is in place to safeguard and advance human development and welfare. The good of life is seen as wellbeing. We have wellbeing when the whole of our embodied existence goes well. It means the satisfaction or happiness of life, resulting from our physical and psychological needs being reasonably met. However, the promotion of human wellbeing is to be done with respect for human dignity. The modern liberal democracy will not sanction an action that violates human dignity, even when it is intended for people's good. All human rights are based on the inviolability of human dignity. Human

wellbeing is to be promoted without violating human dignity. It is unethical and dehumanizing to neglect human wellbeing and infringe human dignity. An act is judged morally acceptable (morally good) if it enhances human welfare, preserving the dignity of human life.

For modern liberal democracy the political and moral good is, in short, individual wellbeing and human dignity. It protects this good by laws. But it does not answer why we should be moral and protect this good. The answer should come from the analysis of the human person. This we do next.

The Ethical Person

Ethics is relational. Moral responsibility and practice is my response to the other (other person). It is in the context of I-other relationship that a person becomes an ethical person, both as the doer and the recipient of an ethical action. When I perform an ethical action to someone, I become an ethical person as doer. When someone does an ethical action to me, I become an ethical person as a recipient of that action. But the question is: why should I be ethical to others and others to me. Neither is it me that constitutes the other an ethical being, nor is the other that constitutes me an ethical being. If it were so, morality would have been a matter of personal taste and relative choice and me and you could not have agreed on any course of action, making social life totally anarchic and impossible. So we should look for the being-principles that constitute morality and the moral person, the principles which the particular me and you can subscribe to.

If I and the other as particular individuals can neither constitute nor become the norm of morality, we should put both the egos (particular selves of me and the other) behind the "veil of ignorance" (Rawls). When my ego and your ego are thus temporarily suspended, what emerges is the human I which is present in you and me, making both of us human subjects. It is to this human subjectivity that we can subscribe. One is an ethical person because of this principle. Humans are ethical persons by virtue of being subjects and never objects.

A subject is a thinking, feeling and willing entity. Reason, emotion and volition – this triple mental function makes an entity a subject. Our brains are wired to think, feel and choose. These interrelated actions

together constitute the human mind (consciousness). In the exercise of these mental functions we become self-aware that we are subjects and not objects. If an entity does not posses these mental properties, it is considered an object. The human person is a subject and always refuses to be an object. The dignity of a human person arises out of the irreducibility of her or his subjectivity to objectivity. Any attempt to reduce the other to an object is an unethical act. The act is unethical, because I ontologically fail in my attempt to reduce the other to an object. If the other human being were intrinsically liable to objectification (reification), there wouldn't be any immorality for my effort to objectify her or him. I am attempting to perform an ontologically impossible task. I can make an attempt at objectification of the other subject but I fail in the end. I deny thought, emotion and volition to the other. But the other as subject always resists my attempt of her or his objectification. By my effort of dehumanizing the other, it is not the other but I that finally becomes dehumanized and unethical. In other words, when I do an unethical act to the other, the act rebounds on me and makes me unethical.

First, as a thinking being I reflect on my experience and form my epistemically justified (rational) beliefs. I have the right to hold my reasonably legitimate ideas and views. Right to the responsible exercise of thought and free speech is inalienable. Second, as a feeling being I desire for the emotional satisfaction of my life. I have the right to seek an adequate fulfillment of my emotional life. I want others to respect my feelings. Third, as a willing being I want to be an autonomous subject. I make myself a free person by responsible exercise of choices. I choose and become the author of my life.

If I, as a human subject, have right to thought, emotion and volition, I should concede the same right to other human beings. By the analogy of our nervous system and by the perception of what other people do and speak, I can reasonably infer that other people also have the similar mental states which I have. And if other people have thoughts, emotions and volitions like me, they are subjects on a par with me. They require the same respect that I accord to myself and my obligation to respect the other becomes a universal moral imperative.

In the light of our foregoing analysis of the ethical and the ethical person we submit that the human subject is the centre of morality. Human

wellbeing with respect for the human subject as rational, emotional and free entity is the being-principle that constitutes morality. And the human subject standing in moral reciprocity with the other is the being-principle that makes ethical persons. Then, the ethical task is our conscious acceptance of these principles and action accordingly.

The Ethical Task

Each human being, as subject, is valuable per se and demands our recognition, respect and regard. Moreover, it is in the context of my relationship with the other that I achieve my wellbeing. The other should be there to accord recognition, respect and regard to me. These understanding will take us to the ethics of intersubjectivity. The ethics of intersubjectivity speaks the truth that every human being is a subject and has inalienable dignity; it upholds fundamental human rights and personal freedoms. It demands a mutual respect for human dignity and responsibility for human welfare. The ethics of intersubjectivity makes our fundamental ethical task to be one of living our life with other humans in a truly good and meaningful way. It makes us feel the warmth of our being as being-with-the-other, infusing meaning and happiness into our interpersonal existence. It brings peace and prosperity to people, making national and international matrix work well.

We agree with Levinas that the ethical responsibility comes through the other. In my encounter with the other, the other calls for my ethical response. But we do not believe it is due to the other's pleading for my mercy. The face-to-face encounter must be one of equality, mutual respect and reciprocity. The respect and obligation for the other arise out of my ontological recognition of the other as a person on a par with me in dignity and basic liberties. A subject stands in relation with the other subject in the face-to-face reciprocity of equality and openness to mutual affirmation and enrichment.

The ontological and ethical relation and responsibility of intersubjectivity requires us to have open and meaningful dialogue. Only if I enter into a genuinely free and fair dialogue with the other can I live my intersubjectivity meaningfully well. As Rawls and Habermas rightly suggest, dialogue is essential for political intersubjectivity as well. A dialogical paradigm for intersubjectivity will protect the individual without

putting community into jeopardy. It will prevent the political authority from being totalitarian, make law and judiciary more humane and make us concerned about the least advantaged. Ultimately what counts important is the wellbeing and dignity of the individual. Society is but people, the interactive persons.

Interpersonal and social conflicts arise when one subject tries to make another an object. This attempt is unethical and the moral bad (sin for religion) enters into the world of interpersonal relations. The effort itself is self-defeating ontologically. In the first place, every subject refuses to be reduced to the level of an object and resists the attempt physically and psychologically. In the second place, the act rebounds on the doer, making her or him lose her or his dignified existence as a human subject. Unless people recognize the basic human relationality of intersubjectivity, they cannot get out of the master-slave (Hegel) or the being-for-itself versus being-in-itself (Sartre) tangle which makes social existence conflictual, unhappy and meaningless. Subject-object interpersonal relation is one of confrontation and conflict, whereas subject-subject relation is one of cooperation and concord.

In a pluralistic and democratic society, people can come together and ensure peace and social harmony only on the ontological vision of the human person. We can unite in the name of the human person and the dignity of human life. When religions become divisive and ideologies clash, it is to the ethical person that people can subscribe. The philosophy and ethics of intersubjectivity should be the antidote to a culture of death (terrorism and violence) and ethnic and communal hate. Where individuals are oppressed and their rights and freedoms are at stake and when those people and agencies accountable fail to safeguard and advance human welfare, the potential of the intersubjectivity vision and ideal shall not remain untapped.

Though this paper limits its ethical discussion to humans, a word might be said of environmental ethics. As beings-part-of-the world we have a responsibility towards entire nature. Of course, except humans no other entities in nature need to be respected as subjects. But caring for nature is an ecological need for the wellbeing of the human subjects. For our sake and for the sake of generations to come, we are to respect nature. Our responsibility for the other includes also our responsible use of nature.

A THEODICY FOR THE POSTMODERN AGE

Kurian Kachappilly♦

Thesis Statement: *"Process Theodicy provides us with a constructive postmodern alternative to the 'traditional' theodicy, by redefining the omnipotence of God (one of the elements of the incompatible triad) from a 'metaphysical' consideration of the nature of the world upon which the power is exerted."*

I. Introduction

1. "Theodicy" is derived from the Greek *theos*, 'God', and *dikē*, 'justice' or 'right'. The word is thus a kind of shorthand for the defence of the justice and righteousness of God in face of the fact of evil. The coinage of the word (in its French form, *théodicée*) is commonly attributed to Leibniz.[1] Traditionally, "theodicy" has been used in different senses: (i) the discipline that attempts to justify the ways of God to humanity, (ii) the attempt to vindicate the goodness and justice of God in ordaining or allowing moral and natural evil and human suffering, and (iii) the attempt to make God's omnipotence and omnibenevolence compatible with the existence of evil. The problem of evil thus concerns the contradiction between the reality of evil on the one hand, and religious beliefs in the goodness and power of God on the other.

A. Limiting the subject: 'Theodicy'

2. "Theodicy" is accordingly used as an accepted 'name' for the whole subject, comprising of a systematic investigation of the problem of evil and its attempted solutions; the attempts to reconcile the unlimited goodness of all-powerful God with the reality of evil. Leibniz in his *Theodicy* speaks of three kinds of evil: [2] (a) the evil originated by human beings, that is *moral* evil or sin; (b) the physical sensation of pain and the

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[1] *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, "Theodicy," Vol. XII, 289. John T. Merz (*Leibniz*, London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1884, 101) says of Leibniz that in 1697, in a letter to Magliabechi, he uses the word "*Théodicée*" as the title of an intended work.

[2] Cf. G.W. Leibniz, *Theodicy: Essays on the Goodness of God, Freedom of Man and the Origin of Evil*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952, § 21.

mental anguish of suffering which may be caused by *physical*/natural evil such as diseases, earthquakes, etc.; and (c) *metaphysical* evil, viz. the finitude, contingency and hence imperfections of all created things.

3. Thus evil may be the product of human and non-human agency. Evil caused by human beings, such as murdering an innocent person, is moral. Drought that causes crop failure and widespread famine is an example of natural/physical evil. Although this theoretical distinction between moral evil and natural evil is useful, it should not be drawn too sharply, for human beings may be natural agents, for instance, as carriers of diseases, and evil caused by natural agency may warrant moral opprobrium, if it was preventable and those responsible for doing so failed. *Our discussion, nonetheless, tends to focus on moral evil, since it is much for likely to be within human realm than natural evil.*

4. In a very general classification, the religions of the world have offered three main types of solution. (1) There is the 'monism' of the Vedanta teachings of Hinduism, according to which the phenomenal world with all its evils is '*maya* or illusion'. Considered as a response to the problem of evil, this view is defective in that it redescribes the problem but does not attempt to solve it, for it leaves unexplained the evil of our suffering from the compulsive illusion of evil. This line of interpretation is also favoured by Stoic-Spinozists, who view evil as illusory. (2) There is the 'dualism' exemplified most dramatically in ancient Zoroastrianism, with its opposed good and evil deities – Ahura Mazda and Ahriman. A much less 'dualism' was propounded by Plato[3] and is found in various forms in the finite deity doctrines of such western philosophers as J.S. Mill[4] and E. Brightman.[5] (3) There is the distinctive combination of an ethical dualism set within an ultimate metaphysical monism (in the form of 'monotheism') that has been developed within Christianity. Christianity (like Judaism and Islam) is committed to a monotheistic doctrine of God as absolute in goodness and power and as the creator of the universe *ex nihilo*.

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[3]Plato, *Timaeus*, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. E. Hamilton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1973, 30a, 48a.

[4]J.S. Mill, "Attributes," *Three Essays in Religion*, London: Blackwell, 1874.

[5]E. Brightman, *A Philosophy of Religion*, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1940, Cha 8-10.

B. Positing the 'Problem of Evil'

5. The problem of evil stems from assuming three things, of which only two are compatible (sometimes called the *incompatible triad*): the omnipotence of God, the omnibenevolence of God, and the existence of evil. As discussed by philosophers, the question is 'whether it is *rational* to believe in the existence of an all-powerful, perfectly good creator given our experience of the evils that afflict our world'. The challenge of the fact of evil to the Christian/Jewish/Islamic faith has accordingly been formulated as a dilemma.

6. Epicurus presented the problem in the following way: "Is God willing to prevent evil, but *not able* to prevent evil? Then He is not omnipotent. Is God able to prevent evil, but *not willing* to prevent evil? Then He is not omnibenevolent. Is God *both* willing and able to prevent evil? Then why does evil exist?"[6] The problem of evil is generally formalized as a syllogism using the three premises, as follows:

A. If God is omnipotent, God could prevent all evil.
B. If God is perfectly good, God would want to prevent all evil.
C. There is evil.
D. Therefore (an omnipotent, perfectly good) God does not exist.[7]

7. This "simple statement," to use a phrase of David Griffin, of the problem of evil has generated much discussion and debate in the philosophical-theological circles. The strategy of the "traditional theodicies," in general, was to say that God is responsible for evil but not indictable for it. They could do it by maintaining that all *apparent* evil was really, from the ultimate perspective, a means to good, and hence was not *genuinely* evil. Traditional theists from St. Augustine to St. Thomas, and Calvin to Schleiermacher, have agreed with the words of Alexander Pope:

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[6]David Hume presented the same problem thus: "If evil in the world is the intention of the Deity, then He is not benevolent. If evil in the world is contrary to His intention, then He is not omnipotent. But evil is either in accordance with His intention or contrary to it. Therefore, either the Deity is not benevolent, or He is not omnipotent." See, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, ed. H.D. Aiken, New York: Hafner Publishing Co., 1948, 67 & 69

[7]David Griffin, *God, Power, and Evil: A Process Theodicy*, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976, 18-9.

"All discord, harmony not understood; All partial evil, universal good; [...] One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right."

8. On the contrary, the process theists do not deny that there is genuine evil. The general thesis of the process theodicy or "postmodern theodicy" which follows is that *the possibility of genuine evil is rooted in the metaphysical characteristics of the world.* In Whitehead's words": "The categories governing the determination of things are the reasons why there should be evil."[8]

II. A Process/Postmodern Theodicy

9. The works of the process philosophers, Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne, have made a significant impact upon the contemporary philosophical and theological thought. Whitehead's important insights on the nature of God and Hartshorne's call for 'new look at the problem of evil' together with the writings of other process theists, like John Cobb Jr. and David Griffin, have greatly contributed for constructing a postmodern/process theodicy. Process theists insist that the historical formulation of the theodicy problem can be 'dissolved' by modifying the traditional doctrine of divine power. Such a modification lies at the heart of a postmodern/process theodicy.

10. The traditional discussion of the problem of evil has been, Hartshorne remarks, "a mistake or a pseudoproblem,"[9] perpetrated by a mass of undigested notions that are too vague or inconsistent to permit any useful application of rational arguments. He opines that the manner in which the theodicy question has been posed is problematic and as such insures that the conventional answers themselves are problematic. The theodicy problem is the result of a 'confused and untenable' belief about the meaning and definition of the term, 'God'. God is understood to be a perfect being in every way, and hence in power, goodness, etc. Accordingly, it was held that "a being perfect in power must have the power to prevent anything undesirable from occurring."[10] This "alleged notion of omnipotence," [11] is what David Griffin calls the "omnipotence

[8]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, New York, Free Press, 223.

[9]Hartshorne, "A new Look at the Problem of Evil," in *Current Philosophical Issues*, ed., F.C. Dommeyer, Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1966, 203.

[10]*Ibid.*, 202-204.

[11]Hartshorne, *Logic of Perfection*, La Salle: Open Court, 1962, 189.

fallacy."[12] The crux of the 'omnipotence fallacy' lies in the claim that the meaning of perfect power or omnipotence can be settled apart from a metaphysical discussion of the nature of the 'beings' upon whom this perfect power is to be exercised.

A. Logical Considerations

11. The actual definitions of "omnipotence," and hence the meaning of the term 'omnipotent being' are quite ambiguous. On an intuitive level, the idea of omnipotence suggests that a being such as God has unrestricted ability to do anything whatsoever. But this definition, without some qualifications, is likely to issue in unpalatable consequences, such as 'God can render possible what is logically impossible'. Daunted by this problem, most thinkers agree that omnipotence should *not* be defined as the power to do anything that happens to be 'verbalizable'.

(a) St. Thomas Aquinas

12. St.Thomas Aquinas offered an account of "omnipotence," which seemed to avoid this logical inconsistency. Giving the meaning of "omnipotence," St.Thomas wrote: "Whatever involves a contradiction is not held by omnipotence, for it just cannot possibly make sense of being possible."[13] For example, "it is incompatible with the meaning of absolutely possible that anything involving the contradiction of simultaneously being and not-being should fall under divine omnipotence. Such a contradiction is not subject to it, not from any impotence in God, but because it simply does not have the nature of being feasible or possible."[14] But he then added: "Better, however, to say that it cannot be done, rather than God cannot do it," as if this were some limitation on divine power. St.Thomas thus concluded, "since power is relative to what is possible, divine power can do everything that is possible, and on this account is God called omnipotent."[15]

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[12]David R. Griffin, *God, Power, and Evil: A Process Theodicy*, 258.

[13]Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, trans. Blackfriars, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1970, Ia. 25, 3.

[14]*Ibid.*

[15]*Ibid.*

(b) Rene Descartes

13. Many philosophers and theologians after St.Thomas have followed similar line of thinking in describing the meaning of "omnipotence." Rene Descartes, for example, acknowledged that mathematical truths, once God created them, couldn't be subsequently altered or abrogated. He, however, claims that although we perceive it to be altogether impossible for what is done to be undone, "it is no defect of power in God not to do it."[16] For, this inability is something self-imposed by a being who "determined Himself by creating what he created."[17] Likewise, Mackie, after asserting that "there are no limits to what an omnipotent being can do," notes that most theists have excluded the logically impossible, and says that this qualification, however, "does not reject anything that is essential to theism."[18]

(c) Richard Swinburne

14. Richard Swinburne also holds a similar view: "We may rightly say of God that there are certain things which, for reasons of logic, he cannot do - for instance, change the past, or make something red and green all over." But, despite appearances, he remarks, "we are not describing a limit to God's power."[19] God will be omnipotent because "he can do any action, that is, any action the description of which makes ultimate sense."[20] In accordance with these descriptions, Ahern defines 'omnipotence' as "the power to bring about what is logically possible for a being of 'unlimited' power to bring about."

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[16]Rene Descartes, *Philosophical Letters*, trans. Anthony Kenny, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970, 241.

[17]Rene Descartes, *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, trans. Haldane and Ross, New York: Dover, 1955, 250.

[18]J.L. Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence," in *God and Evil*, ed. Nelson Pike, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1964, 47, 50.

[19]Richard Swinburne, *The Christian God*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994, 129. What makes some of these descriptions so perplexing is that most of the theologians and philosophers take 'omnipotence' to be an enduring property, a property God could not lose at any time he exists. See Walter Glannon, "Omnipotence and the transfer of power," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 36 (1994), 81-103; Edward Wierenga, *The Nature of God: An Inquiry into Divine Attributes*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989, 31-2.

[20]*Ibid.*, 152.

(d) Logical conclusions

15. Perhaps no one would disagree with this definition, at least if 'unlimited' were equated with "greatest conceivable" and hence with "greatest possible." In this case 'omnipotence' means that a perfect being must have the greatest power that it is possible for a being to have, to be decided on the basis of what is consistently conceivable. With this definition, the statement that a perfect reality, and hence God, is an omnipotent being does not in itself entail that an omnipotent being could unilaterally bring about 'a state of affairs'.

16. But many authors, including Ahern himself, assume this entailment, as it is evident from the following definition: "The power *unilaterally* to affect/effect any state of affairs, if that state of affairs is intrinsically possible."[21] Saint Thomas also endorses this stronger interpretation, in which "omnipotence" literally means that God really has *all* the power, and that "God causes everything that occurs."[22]

17. But these two definitions or meanings of omnipotence are not identical. In the first, "the idea of 'what is logically possible' is applied not simply to a state of affairs in itself, but to what God could *bring about*."[23] From this definition it does not necessarily follow that a being with perfect power could unilaterally bring about a state of affairs, simply if it is intrinsically possible. In other words, "a state of affairs is logically possible" is not identical with "it is logically possible that something/someone could unilaterally effect a state of affairs." It is this distinction, which is overlooked, in the supporting argument for the "all-powerfulness" of God. But if the latter premise is accepted without qualification, it would involve an inconsistency between 'an omnipotent God exists' and 'some actual beings exist'.

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[21]M.B. Ahern, *The Problem of Evil*, London: Routeledge & Kegan Paul, 1971, 15.

[22]Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia. 14, 8. This doctrine of God's 'omnicausality', implying God's monopoly on power, is consistent with the combination of divine omniscience and simplicity. Since God knows all things, and his knowing cannot be distinct from God's power or causation, it follows that God causes all things. See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia. 25, 1, ad 2.

[23]David R. Griffin, *God, Power, and Evil: A Process Theodicy*, 262.

B. Metaphysical Considerations

18. Faced with this problem, Hartshorne has stressed the need for a proper understanding of the concept of perfection - perfect goodness, perfect power, as he thinks that, without this, little progress can be made. An adequate understanding of perfect power requires a discussion of the nature of 'world'. For, if 'to exert power' is always to exert power over "something," then the nature of "something" upon which power is exerted must be considered, before drawing conclusions as to what a being with perfect power could do.[24] If the "something" is thought to be beings constituting a world distinct from God, then the nature of such a 'world' must be examined. The metaphysical question of the nature of a "world" is often overlooked in most discussions of God and omnipotence.[25] We will here focus directly upon the metaphysical issue: Is it possible for one actual being's condition to be completely determined by a being or beings other than itself?

(a) 'To be is to be powerful' (Plato)

19. In *Sophist* Plato proposes 'power' as a distinctive "mark to distinguish real things." He suggests that "anything has real being that is so constituted as to possess any sort of power either *to affect* anything else or *to be affected*, in however small a degree, by the most insignificant agent, though it be only once."[26] If 'being is power', then the idea that there are some real beings devoid of power is a pure inference;[27] and the idea of powerless beings is finally meaningless, since it cannot be given any experiential basis. On the contrary, to speak of real beings as having power, has an experiential grounding. As many philosophers have pointed

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[24]See Hartshorne, "God and Man Not Rivals," *Journal of Liberal Religion* 6/2 (1944), 11.

[25]At least two reasons for the neglect of this metaphysical question are: "the influence still exerted by traditional ideas about omnipotence, and the recent neglect of metaphysics in favour of logic and ordinary language" (David R. Griffin, *God, Power, and Evil: A Process Theodicy*, 265).

[26] Plato, *Sophist*, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (Bollingen Series LXXI), ed. E. Hamilton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973, 247.

[27]Here it is worth mentioning that even some of those (for instance, Spinoza) who deny that we ourselves have any power of self-determination, admit that we seem to have such power, and, accordingly, draw proper conclusion, i.e. if we are totally devoid of power, we are not actualities.

out, my present experience is an actuality; and I have direct experience of my experience itself as having some power to determine itself, namely, to determine how it will respond to all the influences upon it. Accordingly, this provides me with an experiential basis for speaking meaningfully of an actual entity.

20. According to Whitehead's categorical scheme, "creativity" (by which the many become one and are increased by one) is a universal feature of actuality.[28] To say that an actuality has 'creativity' is to say that it has 'power'. Whitehead, like Plato, conceived the nature of this creative power as twofold: "Power thus considered is twofold; viz, as able to make, or able to receive, any change: the one may be called 'active', and the other 'passive' power."[29] In the language of causation, it is the capacity to exercise final causation and efficient causation. To explain how these two dimensions of creativity are related, it is necessary to briefly expose Whitehead's unique understanding of what an "actual entity" is.

21. An actual entity is "an occasion of experience."[30] Each actual occasion exists in two modes, first 'one' and then the 'other'. An occasion comes into being as an experiencing subject. The data of its experience are provided by previous actual occasions. Its reception of these data is called its "feelings" or "positive prehensions" of those previous occasions. It becomes a unified subject by integrating these feelings. This process of integration into concrete unity is called "concrescence."[31] When the process of concrescence is complete, the occasion becomes an object of experience, i.e., an object for other subjects. Its subjectivity perishes, and it thereby acquires objectivity. It transmits some of its feelings to subsequent actual occasions. This process, in which data are passed from one occasion to another, is termed "transition."[32]

22. These two processes – concrescence and transition – embody the two types of power inherent in each actual occasion. The process of concrescence embodies the occasion's power of self-determination, its

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[28]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 7, 20, 164.

[29]*Ibid.*, 57. Cf. C. Hartshorne, *Reality as Social Process*, Glencoe: Free Press, 1953,137.

[30]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 189.

[31]A.N. Whitehead, Adventures *of Ideas*, New York: Free Press, 1967,303.

[32]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 320, 322f.

power of final causation. The actual occasion then manifests its power of other determination, its efficient causation, in the process of transition. This dimension of power is equally essential to the occasion's actuality: "Its own constitution involves that its own activity in *self*-formation passes into its activity of *other*-formation."[33] The point to be stressed here is the fact that our world is composed of actualities with this twofold type of power is not a contingent feature of our particular world, but a *metaphysical* principle about reality. *Any* world would necessarily contain actualities with this twofold power/creativity. And if there is an actual world, and an actual world by metaphysical necessity contains a multiplicity of beings with power, then it is impossible for any one being to have a monopoly on power.

(b) Absolute power is self-destructive (St. Thomas)

23. Secondly, the very notion of "all-powerful," interpreted as to mean that there is no power except God's power, is self-destructive. Take for example: If several sailors carry the same lifeboat, each carries a part of the total weight. If the strongest sailor carries all the weight himself, the others will be left with nothing to do. Similarly, an omnipotent God would rob all agents of their proper causality. If creatures have no power at all, then the power exercised by God in absolute control over them seems at best infinitesimal. St. Thomas argues that the assertion that God alone exercises causality in the world would in fact imply a diminishment of God's power: "Some have understood God to work in every agent in such a way that no created power has any effect in things, but that God alone is the immediate cause of everything wrought."[34] But, as St. Thomas rightly observes, "this is impossible, because the order of cause and effect would be taken away from created things: and this would imply lack of power in the Creator, for it is due to the power of the cause, that it bestows active power on its effect."[35] That is to say, God's power is manifest in the fact that God is able to give the creatures its own power to act.

24. Hence the view that all creatures have real power, even though it denies the monopoly of power to God, attributes more power to God than does the doctrine of omnipotence, when this is taken strictly. These ideas

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[33]A.N. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, 248.

[34]St. Thomas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 105, 5.

[35]*Ibid.*

are clearly stated by Charles Hartshorne, when he says that omnipotence is sometimes viewed as a monopolistic concentration of power - the wielding, by one agent, of all the power there is or could be. This implies that all other beings are powerless. But if "being is power" (Plato), then power over being is power over power, and the ideal or perfect agent will enjoy the *optimal concentration of efficacy which is compatible with there being other efficacious agents.*[36]

25. Now, if it is a metaphysical truth that actual entities as such have power, and that any actual world would have to contain actual entities, what can the term "perfect power" or "omnipotence" mean? "Perfect power," then, must be defined as the greatest power it is conceivable for a being to have. This definition is simply a version of Anselm's definition of a perfect being (God) as "that than which none greater can be conceived."[37]

(c) "None greater can be conceived" (Anselm)

26. Describing the meaning of the word 'God', Anselm wrote, "to be God is to be such that 'than which none greater can be conceived'." This preliminary definition of God as the "greatest conceivable being" seems unobjectionable.[38] And Hartshorne has all praise for Anselm's definition, which he calls "a great discovery - a stroke of genius."[39] For, Hartshorne thinks that it captures the essence of the term "God," which refers to the

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[36]Hartshorne, "Omnipotence," in Vergilius Ferm, ed. *An Encyclopaedia of Religion*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1945, 545. Elsewhere Hartshorne writes: "The supreme power is exercised not over the powerless but over genuine powers. Over what else could it be exercised, since "being is power" (Plato)? A plurality of powers with no supreme power would be chaos, and could not exist. But a plurality of powers with a supreme power is still a plurality of powers; and only crude reasoning and inattention to verbal ambiguities [...] have prevented this from being clearly seen and consistently adhered to" ("God and Man Not Rivals," Journal of Liberal Religion, 6/2 (1944), 11-2).

[37]St. Anselm, *Proslogium*, trans. S.N. Deane, La Salle: Open Court, 1903, 14.

[38]Moreover, to say that God can be defined in this way leaves open the possibility that God is even more excellent or worshipful than our ability to conceive. Hence it may avoid objections from Wittgensteinians, who fear that, by defining God, we are limiting God to human language.

[39]Hartshorne, A *Natural Theology for Our Time*, La Salle: Open Court, 1967, 17. Cf. Hartshorne, *Anselm's Discovery*, 31.

"supremely excellent," or "all-worshipful" being. What really follows from this definition is the "unsurpassability" of God. For, as Hartshorne argues, "if God could be surpassed by a greater or better, should we not worship the one who would surpass him - even were this but a conceivable, not an actual being?"[40]

27. However, differences emerge when one begins to deal with questions as to how much and/or what kind of power it is conceivable for a being to have. There is an ambiguity in Anselm's definition owing to the simple phrase "none greater" (in *all*, *some* or *no* respects) and he implicitly resolved the ambiguity in a wrong way, so as to make unsurpassability coincide with infinity, or the notion of a *nec plus ultra*.[41]

28. It was Leibniz, a defender of Anselm's argument, who brought out the possibility of contradiction in the idea of "greatest conceivable," and also made the best start toward clarifying the ambiguity. The notion of perfection, taken as "greatest conceivable," i.e. as an "absolute maximum," does not make sense logically, (although it is still employed as a category in the religious parlance), for if we take any conceivable number, a greater number can be conceived.[42] The resolution Leibniz sought was to define his notion of the perfect being in a different way. By "perfection," Leibniz wrote, "I mean every simple quality which is positive and absolute or which expresses whatever it expresses without any limits."[43] To put his point more clearly, 'perfection' in this sense is a maximum degree of a positive, simple quality. The conclusion Leibniz drew was that "greatest" must be taken to mean a purely qualitative, not a quantitative, maximum. However, Leibniz also claimed that knowledge and power, holding these qualities to be simple, are perfections, which can be exemplified to a maximum degree: "The greatest knowledge and omnipotence contain no impossibility."[44]

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[40]Hartshorne, *Natural Theology for Our Time*, 17.

[41]Hartshorne, "The Idea Of A Worshipful Being," *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 2/4 (1964), 165.

[42]Hartshorne, *AD*, 26f; *NTOT*, 19f.

[43]G.W. Leibniz, *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, 167.

[44]G.W. Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*, trans. P.G. Lucas and L. Grint, Manchester: University Press, 1953, chap. 1.

29.What is neglected in Leibniz's definition of perfection is the quantitative aspect of reality. According to Hartshorne, after all, quantity may have a value and it is not attainable without having it.[45] He further argues that, for two reasons, it is literally impossible for God to be perfect in *all* respects. First, it is literally impossible for God to actualize all possibilities, or possible values are inexhaustible by God's actuality;[46] for they are infinite in number (and an absolute number is not possible). Hartshorne writes: "The infinity of possibilities in God's nature is inexhaustible in actuality even by divine power, or any conceivable power. For each creative synthesis furnishes materials for a novel and richer synthesis."[47] Secondly, it is logically impossible that there should be an actualization of all possible values, for some values, to use the phrase of Leibniz, are "incompossibles."[48] That is, there are positive values that are not capable of all being actualized. The actualization of one possibility always means that some other possibility has not been actualized. For example, if Anna has decided to write on Hartshorne's *Logic of Perfection*, God would know that; but God could not know equally possible alternatives, which Anna could have decided, but she did not, for instance, write on Heidegger's *Being and Time*. This is also the meaning of *choice*, and Hartshorne reasons, "if the possibilities we reject are not left un-actualized, any more than those we accept, then our choices are cosmically null."[49]

(d) 'Metaphysics of freedom' and Evil (Whitehead & Hartshorne)

30. According to Whitehead the *actual occasions* have "the power for self-determination" or freedom vis á vis God: "All actual entities share with God this character of self-causation. For this reason every actual entity also shares with God the characteristics of transcending all other

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[45]Hartshorne, *Anselm's Discovery*, 27.

[46]Hartshorne, *Philosophers Speak of God*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953, 160, 242.

[47]Hartshorne, "The Dipolar Conception of Deity," *Review of Metaphysics* 21/2 (1967), 285.

[48]G.W. Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*, 28; Hartshorne, *PSG*, 506; *AD*, 28.

[49]Hartshorne, *Reality as Social Process*, Glencoe: The Free Press, 1953, 99.

actual entities, including God."[50] Since the world has its own freedom/creativity by which it can refuse to conform to the divine input, which is good, there is evil in the world. Evil arises from this capacity not to conform to the divine purpose: "So far as the conformity is incomplete, there is evil in the world."[51] This nonconformity is not necessary; hence evil is not necessary. But the possibility for the nonconformity is necessary; hence the possibility for evil is necessary.

31. Hartshorne's "metaphysics of freedom" has also argued the case thoroughly that all reality, including the most and trivial levels, has some degree of genuine creativity. The 'minimal solution' to the problem of evil then is to comprehend that it is not God who determines all events, but the 'creaturely freedom' from which evils spring. Indeed, "since all creatures have some freedom, all evil can and should be viewed as involving unfortunate [...] cases of creaturely decision."[52]

32. With "a multiplicity of creative agents, some risk of conflict and suffering (i.e., clash of individual interests) is inevitable."[53] The source of evil is this multiplicity. But it is equally the source of good. As Hartshorne observes, "risk of evil and opportunity for good are two aspects of just one thing, *multiple freedom.*" [54] Risk and opportunity go together, not because God chooses to have it so, but because opportunity without risk is meaningless or contradictory. This is the sole, but sufficient reason for evil as such and in general, while as for particular evils, by definition they have no ultimate reason.

33. Accordingly, God's role is said to be 'not to decide unilaterally' the details of earthly life – even if this were possible – but rather to provide a world order in which freedom is possible, and hence the prospects for greater aesthetic goods, despite the inevitable evil and destruction which also occur. This does not, however, rule out the possibility of any particular evil, including the imminent self-destruction of the human race. God does not act *ex machina* to combat destructive

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[50]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 222.

[51]A.N. Whitehead, *Religion in the Making*, New York: Macmillan, 1927, 60.

[52]Hartshorne, "A New Look at the Problem of Evil," 205.

[53]Hartshorne, *Creative Synthesis and Philosophic Method*, La Salle: Open Court, 1970, 237-8.

[54]Hartshorne, *A Natural theology for Our Time*, 81.

force with destructive force. It lies in the patient operation of the overpowering rationality of his conceptual harmonization. Or, more accurately, in the words of Whitehead, "[God] is the poet of the world, with tender patience *luring* it by his vision of truth, beauty, and goodness."[55]

(e) Persuasive Power of God

34. On these grounds, process theists, unlike classical theists, argue that the divine creative influence must be "persuasive, not coercive." According to Whitehead, "one of the greatest intellectual discoveries in the history of religion" was Plato's suggestion that "the divine element in the world is to be conceived as a persuasive agency and not as a coercive agency."[56] In Plato's vision, the creation of the world involves a victory of 'persuasion over necessity', and as such is not a total determination of all the details of the world.[57]

35. Whitehead's conceptuality for understanding God's *modus operandi* as persuasive centres on the notion of the "initial aim." [58] All pure possibilities or "eternal objects" are contained in the "primordial nature" of God. The primordial nature is an envisagement of these ideals with the urge toward their actualization in the world.[59] Each actual occasion begins by prehending God and therefore this divine urge for the realization of possibilities. Each occasion thereby receives from God an "ideal aim" or "initial aim." This is an initial persuasion toward that possibility for the occasion's existence, which would be best for it, given its context. This aim is sometimes termed the "initial subjective aim." However, this initial aim does not necessarily become the subject's own aim; rather the "subjective aim" is a product of its own decision. That is, God gives the initial aim, but the subject chooses the subjective aim.

36. The fact that the power of this divinely given initial aim is not coercive, so that divine determinism is avoided, is made clear in many passages: "Each temporal entity [...] derives from God its basic conceptual

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[55]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 346. (Italics added)

[56]A.N. Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, 213.

[57]Plato, *Timaeus*, 47-48.

[58]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 224, 244-45.

[59]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 32; *Adventures of Ideas*, 357.

aim, relevant to its actual world, yet with indeterminations awaiting its own decisions."[60] Again, "The initial stage of the aim is rooted in the nature of God, and its completion depends on the self-causation of the subject-superject."[61] In other words, God seeks to 'persuade' each occasion toward that possibility for its own existence, which would be best for it, but God cannot control the finite occasion's self-actualization.

37. Whitehead thus consistently rejects the traditional notion of 'unqualified omnipotence' without rejecting divine providence altogether in order to solve the problem of evil. And he grounds this rejection of 'unqualified omnipotence' upon the *metaphysical* position that creative power and freedom is inherent throughout the realm of actuality. And since God is not in complete control of the events of the world, the occurrence of genuine evil is *not incompatible* with God's beneficence toward all his creatures.

III. Conclusion

38. One of the most common criticisms against process theodicy is that the process God is "too weak," or "too limited" in power. Stephen Fly was among the first to lodge this complaint several decades ago,[62] and since then many commentators have reiterated it. For example, John Hick has recently insisted that "the fundamental criticism of a process theodicy must be a criticism of the doctrine of a limited God."[63] Even writers sympathetic to process thought have found this issue particularly troublesome. The process doctrine that denies 'absolute perfection' has accordingly been called a "weakened form of theism."

39. Surely making a doctrine coherent is not to weaken it. If making a doctrine coherent were to weaken it, then even St.Thomas would not escape a similar allegation. For, he recognized that it would be no objection to God's omnipotence, if we were to say that he could not do any logically impossible action. For, St.Thomas wrote: "Anything that implies

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[60]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 224.

[61]*Ibid.*, 244.

[62]Stephen Ely, *The Religious Availability of Whitehead's God*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1942.

[63]John Hick, "An Ireanean Theodicy," in Stephen T. Davis, ed., *Encountering Evil*, Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981, 122.

a contradiction does not fall under God's omnipotence."[64] A good number of thinkers have followed St.Thomas' line of reasoning, but in their own way.[65] For example, Swinburne, in an attempt to make theism coherent, suggests a narrower definition of omnipotence, one according to which being 'omnipotent' is compatible with being perfectly free. He then urges that it would not make God less worthy of worship, if he cannot act in ways, which he judges to be irrational.[66]

40. Here it should, however, be noted that most of these thinkers were more concerned with logical coherence than metaphysical issues, such as the nature of the 'world', genuine human freedom, the problem of evil, etc. Isn't it an explicit expression of this concern, when John Paul II says: "Yes, in a certain sense one could say that *confronted with our human freedom, God decided to make himself impotent.*"[67] No one has better expressed both these logical and metaphysical issues in construing the doctrine of God than Hartshorne did.

41. Moreover, the expression "finite God" seems to be objectionable, because there is some ambiguity about this expression itself. It obliterates a subtle distinction between the saying that '*God* is limited', i.e. limited by the decisions of other actualities, and the saying that 'God's *power* is limited'. In the latter case, this language suggests that such a God is 'imperfect' or 'limited' in comparison with some other conceivable notion. For example, Ahern was quoted as stating that a being of limited power

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[64]St. Thomas, *ST*, Ia, 25, 4.

[65]Apart from the names already mentioned, see George I. Mavrodes, "Some Puzzles Concerning Omnipotence," *Philosophical Review* 72 (1963), 221f; Bernard Mayo, "Mr. Keene on Omnipotence," *Mind* 70 (1961), 249f; Alvin Plantinga, *God and Other Minds*, 168f; C. Wade Savage, "The Paradox of the Stone," *Philosophical Review* 76 (1967), 74f.

[66]Richard Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism*, 161f. Here the question Swinburne addresses is "The Paradox of the Stone." The paradox arises when we ask whether God, allegedly an omnipotent being, can make a stone too heavy for himself to lift. If he cannot, then there is an action, which God cannot perform, viz. make such a stone. If he can, then there will be a different action, which he cannot perform, viz. lift the stone. Either way, the argument goes, there is an action, which God cannot perform, and so he is not omnipotent. For a detailed discussion, see *Ibid.*, 152f.

[67]John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1994, 64.

would not be a fitting object of worship, since worship "supposes that a greater being is inconceivable."[68] Similarly, Campbell was cited as saying that we cannot worship a being that is recognized as imperfect in any way, and that limitation of power is an imperfection.[69] Hartshorne would readily agree with these writers that a being that has less than the greatest conceivable power would not be worshipful. He has time and again expressed his concern succinctly: "Instead of saying that God's power is limited, suggesting that it is less than some conceivable power, we should rather say: [God's] power is absolutely maximal, the greatest possible, but even the greatest possible power is still one power among others, is not the only power."[70]

(a) Redefining 'Omnipotence' of God

42. Hartshorne's most favourite method of formulating the idea of God's 'omnipotence' is in terms of "unsurpassability." His formula is that "God is unsurpassable by another."[71] When "unsurpassability" is viewed from the perspective of Anselm's definition: "that than which none greater can be conceived," two meanings are possible: "unsurpassability by others, and unsurpassability by anyone, even by self."[72] Following Anselm, Hartshorne also admits that unsurpassability (here Hartshorne prefers the term "perfection") has two aspects:

> the absolute aspect, *A*, which cannot be surpassed in any way whatever, and the transcendentally relative aspect, or the aspect of transcendent relativity, *R*, which is surpassable only by [...] itself, not by any other individual. Or better, and positively: as *A*, God surpasses all things save only Himself; as *R*, he surpasses all things, including himself.[73]

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[68]M.B. Ahren, *The Problem of Evil*, ix.

[69]Charles Campbell, *On Selfhood and Godhood*, London: The Macmillan Company, 1957, 291.

[70]Hartshorne, *The Divine Relativity*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948,138.

[71]Hartshorne, *Natural Theology for Our Time*, 127.

[72]Hartshorne, "What Did Anselm Discover?," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 17/3 (1962), 220. See also Hartshorne, *Anselm's Discovery*, 28-9.

[73]Hartshorne, *Logic of Perfection*, La Salle: Open Court, 1962, 67. Elsewhere Hartshorne explains these two meanings in a different manner: "It may mean (a) no

43. Anselm himself did take 'unsurpassable' to mean "unsurpassable absolutely."[74] To some extend, Hartshorne does agree with Anselm in thinking that God is unsurpassable, but unsurpassable in whatever respects that is possible. In other words, God is, in some respects, unsurpassable.[75] From this meaning of the 'unsurpassability' of God, Hartshorne logically derives many of God's attributes, such as his creative inexhaustibility and his being eternally without beginning and end. The unsurpassability itself, simply as such, Hartshorne asserts, is immutable; that is, "God could not begin, or cease, to be unsurpassable."[76]

44. Nevertheless, Hartshorne is very emphatic in affirming that God is not unsurpassable absolutely, or in *all* respects; indeed he must, in *some* respects, be *self*-surpassable, for instance, in his actuality. This explicit affirmation implies that God is not 'absolutely perfect' in all respects, because an absolutely perfect being is inconceivable and impossible. Absolute perfection would have to mean the complete actualization of all possible values. Hartshorne argues that it is literally impossible for God to actualise all possibilities, because, as already mentioned, possibilities are infinite in number, and some of them are mutually incompatible.[77]

45. On these grounds, Hartshorne is driven to the conclusion that God does not have a final state of maximum perfection, although, in any given instant, God's attributes must be categoric instances that incomparably surpass those of all other beings. God will still perpetually surpass himself in every future instant as his successive states actualize more and more possibilities. God's perfection must, therefore, be a dynamic and continually growing one. Hartshorne thus willingly speaks of the relative perfection of God, a perfection that can never be fully maximized.[78] In more positive terms, God will always be "the All-surpassing One" who forever surpasses all other beings and himself in the

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individual greater than God is conceivable, or (b) not even God Himself in any conceivable state could be greater than He actually is" (*Ibid.*, 35).

[74]Hartshorne, "What Did Anselm Discover?," 217.

[75]See Hartshorne, *Anselm's Discovery*, 32.

[76]Hartshorne, *Natural Theology for Our Time*, 127.

[77]Cf. Page number 8.

[78]Hartshorne, *Man's Vision of God and Logic of Theism*, Chicago: Clark and Company, 1941, 12-21.

everlasting creative advance. Thus Hartshorne could argue, "God is strictly unsurpassable in whatever aspects, if any, value can be maximized, and, in all other respects, surpassable by himself only."[79]

46. For these reasons Hartshorne agrees with the critics of James and Brightman that their deity is inadequate to be considered worthy of worship.[80] Hartshorne argues that James' view that God must be somehow less than all-inclusive is hardly an adequate alternative, since "a God only more or less supreme might [...] be overwhelmed and destroyed by some aggregation of lesser wills or forces."[81] Regarding Brightman's deity, a similar conclusion is drawn, which follows not only from the fact that Brightman's God is not perfectly good, but also from the fact that, according to Brightman himself, his God has imperfect - that is, less than the greatest conceivable - power.[82] For Hartshorne, in order to worship God, he must be superior to others; i.e. positively, he must be beyond all possible rivalry on the part of other individuals, and, negatively, they must not be able conceivably to surpass him.[83] In short, "God is the name for the one who is unsurpassable by any conceivable being other than himself."[84] The position affirmed here is that God is a perfect reality, greater than which nothing can be consistently conceived. This is so, in spite of the fact that God cannot unilaterally and completely determine the conditions of other actual beings. Since this cannot be done, it is no limitation on divine perfection that God cannot do it. We may, thus, conclude that there is nothing in Hartshorne's doctrine of God which undercuts God's perfection and hence worshipfulness of God.

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[79]Hartshorne, *Creative Synthesis and Philosophic Method*, 248-9.

[80]Hartshorne, "The Dipolar Conception of Deity," 280.

[81]Hartshorne, *Philosophers Speak of God*, 351. Cf. W. James, *A Pluralistic Universe*, New York: Longmans, Green, 1909, 293-5.

[82]Hartshorne, *Philosophers Speak of God*, 363-64. Cf. Edgar S. Brightman, *The Problem of God*, New York: Abingdon Press, 1930, 137; *A Philosophy of Religion*, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1940, 324f.

[83]See Hartshorne, *Anselm's Discovery*, 29, 126, *Man's Vision of God*, 6.

[84]Hartshorne, *Natural Theology for Our Time*, 128.

(b) God as 'Empowering Love'

47. "The power of God is the worship he inspires;"[85] and worship, by definition, "is loving God with all one's heart and mind and soul and strength."[86] The commandment of love proves that the God, whom we worship with all our being, is himself love! This is an affirmation of the definition of God found in the Scriptures: "God is love." Love, thus, is not simply one attribute of God among others, but love is the very 'essence' of God. The good news that the Gospel of Jesus has for us is not simply that "God is love," but "that God's love is powerful, and that God's power is characterized by love."[87]

48. We often think of God both as "all-powerful" and "all-loving." Our tendency is to think of God's power in the way in which we think of our own - except that God's is unlimited. We think of power as the capacity to control what goes on, or in terms of force - in terms of coercion. To be powerful is to be able to control, manipulate and determine a particular course of events. We speak of God exercising power in the same way, except that he does so completely. Accordingly, as Whitehead has pointed out, we have fashioned God "in the image of the Egyptian, Persian, and Roman imperial rulers," and, in doing this, we have lost sight of what he beautifully styled "the Galilean vision" of God as nothing other than personalised Love.[88]

49. The way out of our dilemma, as Polk suggests, resides "in letting the reality of love teach us a new way of understanding power - a way which is first fully manifest in the life and teaching of the man from Galilee."[89] According to this view God's love is not something extraneous to his power, but love defines the very nature of God's power. We must now explain briefly what the nature of God's powerful love is. God's love,

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[85]A.N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, New York: The Free Press, 1967,192.

[86]Hartshorne, "Man's Fragmentariness," *Wesleyan Studies in Religion* 41/6 (1963-64), 17.

[87]David P. Polk, "Empowering Love," *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 1 (1973), 63.

[88]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 342-3. Cf. Norman Pittenger, "What sort of God?," *Forewords* 6 (1981), 3.

[89]David P. Polk, "Empowering Love," 63.

as disclosed in Jesus Christ, is not coercive, but life-giving. God's power does not coerce, nor does it rule,[90] forcing his will upon the creation; for coercion does not bring life, but resistance, stagnation and death. Love of God is rather persuasive; his love keeps on 'luring' by his vision of what is best in our present situation.[91] The power of love thus distinguishes itself categorically from all other manifestations of power in the history of human life. Love is powerful only when it is the other who is empowered by the act of love. Thus God as love "is the great companion – the fellow traveller who understands."[92]

[90]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 343.

[91]*Ibid.*, 344.

[92]A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 351.

RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

Challenges and Prospects

Thomas Kakkattuthadathil[♦]

One of the few issues which exercise a strong control over the intellectual discussion of our period is the relation between religion, philosophy and science. At the same time we have to recall that this discussion is not of a newly generated one but is of at least several centuries old. At present we are passing through an age in which science and technology dominates the temper of human life. It is true that this scientific culture gave us a new power and insight. By this we mean that we are able to manipulate the world in which we are living and fathom the mysteries of nature. At the same time we have to acknowledge that we are passing through an age of crisis. This is an age in which we are facing the crisis of religion, philosophy, culture and humanity itself. Ours is an attempt to bring out the nature and scope of the crisis.

1. Culture as the Germinal Ground of Religion and Philosophy

Religion, philosophy and science have often been thought to be in opposition, but it was not always so. A study of human history shows that these three were closely associated with each other from the very dawn of humanity itself. The apparent conflict between them is a product of history itself. When we search for their origin in history we have to believe that they emerged out of humanity's self-awareness and wonder with the world. It is the product of both a collective and individual passion for wisdom. Their origin can be attributed neither to any particular event nor to a particular culture. What we can say about their origin is that they appear in the cosmos as curious phenomenon, which cannot easily be explained in terms of physiology or physical necessity.

The incessant curiosity of human mind has posed problems, which are identical but fundamental. The answers given to them by philosophers are not only different but also pluralistic and even contradictory. No culture, no people can claim that their answers are absolute and the only valid solutions for the fundamental questions. Thus we can even say that philosophy and religion emerged in different parts of the world as unique events.

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2. The Lure of Philosophy

The traditional philosophical endeavours which go back not only to the Greeks but also to Indians and Chinese have always tried to encompass religion, philosophy and science its their realm. But in Western tradition, ancient Greeks always believed in the power of reason and accepted it as supreme to explain the meaning of reality. The different schools of thought in the past, whether it was rationalistic or empricistic, idealistic or materialistic although were in conflict with each other, all rested on the common claim that reason by itself was able to establish absolute certainty and never questioned the validity of reason to establish truth.

Philosophy thus emerged as one of the noblest of human tasks in human history. Once strongest men were ready to sacrifice their life for the sake of philosophy. Socrates chose to be her martyr rather than to live in flight before her enemies. Plato risked himself twice to win a kingdom for her. Once thrones and Papacies feared philosophy and imprisoned her votaries lest dynasties should fall. Athens exiled Protagoras and Alexander trembled before Hypatia. Regents and kings hounded Voltaire from their land and Karl Marx had to flee from his fatherland in the name of philosophy. Dionysius and his son offered Plato the mastery of Syracuse. Alexander's royal aid made Aristotle the most learned man in the history.

Those were great days for philosophy, when she took bravely all knowledge for her province, and threw herself at every turn into the forefront of the mind's advance towards wisdom. Men honored her then; nothing was held nobler than the love of truth. Philosophy was not a timid spinster hiding in locked towers from the rough usage of the world; her bright eyes did not fear the day. Once she was many-colored light that filled with warmth and radiance the profoundest souls. Philosophy thus occupied a place par excellence among the different human sciences.

3. Religious Origin of Philosophy

Religion and philosophy were very closely associated with each other from the very beginning of human being himself. In a world in which people had so little control over their life, the notion of fate naturally dominated their life. In this enviable and extremely vulnerable situation, life was unpredictable, often tragic and therefore both precious and lamentable. In such a situation, the whims and passions of god and goddesses and the uncertainties of fate dominated the sphere. Thus the

reality of religion had opened the way towards the 'beyond' from the very beginning of humanity itself.

Greek philosophy originated in the realm of Greek religious context. It was in Greece alone that philosophy achieved her autonomy and was explicitly distinguished from religion. Greek philosophy emerged in history as a dissident progressivism with Greek religion, a refused legitimization by the past. Thus Socrates ridicules the gods in whom the common people believed. And philosophy emerged as a natural illumination outside the realm of Greek mythical religion.

4. Scientific Origin of Philosophy

It was Greeks who have invented science, as we now know it. Greeks invented it by searching for the intelligible impersonal permanence underlying the world of change and by hitting upon the brilliant idea of a generalized use of scientific theory: they proposed the idea of assuming a permanent, uniform, abstract order from which the changing world of observation could be deduced. Greek science must be seen as the origin of all that has followed. It was the triumph of order brought by abstract thought into the chaos of immediate experience, and it remained characteristic of Greek scientific thought to be interested primarily in knowledge and understanding and only very secondarily in practical usefulness.

5. Modernity and It Challenges

We are living in a culture in which science and technology dominates every aspects of human life. Science is capable of taking us to the boundaries of science, belief and ethics. It is also a culture in which the ordinary and natural way of looking at ourselves and other realities also changed. At the same time, we have to acknowledge that something has gone wrong with the course of scientific developments in our own culture. Today men are not certain about progress and future. There is a vague uneasiness and a fear that civilization itself may be in another period of decline. There is no single explanation for this change in mood, attitude and outlook.

The development of positive sciences, whatever its advantages, exposes man to a number of reductions which are death-dealing to all that defines him most radically and specifically as man. Seen within this exclusive perspective, what remains is measurable man, i.e., man disfigured, downgraded, made into an object. The humanity of man in its

irreducible originality is missing. Philosophy is not innocent of similar over simplification. In older times, idealism and false spiritualism reduced man to a disembodied cogito with no relationship with the world. The existentialism of Sartre reduces man to an absolute freedom, emancipated both from any link with ideal values and from limitation by any determining forces. Positivism tends to reduce man to various empirical conditions, which surround his life and his activity.

6. Crisis of Science and Technology

The present day crisis in our civilization has something to do with the uncontrolled growth of science and technology. Science has wrought our ruin, because it has given mankind the power to destroy itself. Science in the modern civilization controls and guides most of what we think and do. When a crisis hits the nation it is to the scientists that governments turn, believing that they will be presented with the facts and the remedy in a way that religion and philosophy cannot do. One of the reasons is the tremendous advance of science in the centuries preceding our own and the development of technology as a result of its research. It is true that booming of industries, development of techniques have really provided a better life for man. Along with these developments we learn that these progresses equally suppresses the hidden heart of man. Beyond the progress of science human freedom itself is regulated by a rational order. Thus science and technology in our modern culture appear as a power of destruction.

7. Crisis of Religion

Many philosophers of our modern culture characterize our modern period as one, which is facing crisis of religion. Religion and God have lost much their influence upon men. The sense of the world perfectly and very simply ordained to this God is also lost. Actually religions have lost their guiding role in modern civilization. As a result the modern religions became powerless before the human consciousness. Emmanuel Levinas, Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel are the few among many who have sensed the crisis of religion in our modern age.

8. Crisis of Morality

Our world is experiencing a fundamental crisis: a crisis of morality. This crisis is expressed in different realms of global economy, ecology and politics etc. Hundreds of millions of human beings on our planet increasingly suffer from unemployment, poverty, hunger and the

destruction of their families. Hope for a lasting peace among nations is slipping away from us. There are tensions between the sexes and generations. Children die, kill and killed. More and more countries are shaken by corruption in politics and business. It is increasingly difficult to live together peacefully in our cities because of social, racial and ethnic conflicts, the abuse of drugs, organized crime and even anarchy. Even neighbors often live in fear of one another. Our planet continues to be ruthlessly plundered. A collapse of the ecosystem consequently threatens us.

9. Crisis of Globalisation

Humanity tends to become more and more self-sufficient because of its technological achievements. But discovering the riches of creation and putting them generally to selfish use are no guarantee that such exploitative systems will not eventually crumple. Tragic consequences of this type of achievements have already started to show their awesome faces in our own era itself. Presently, the world is at the dawn of a new era, an era in which economic and political power are being concentrated in the hands of a few countries and multinational corporations and within countries, in the hands of a few people. This phenomenon is known as globalisation. At present globalisation poses a grave threat to our modern culture and human life.

10. Urgent Need for Renewal

Today as in Socrates' time, man is 'absent' from himself. In the course of his daily round he passes by himself, brushes himself in passing the way one anonymous pedestrian does another; but he does not encounter himself. The individual lives in his own vicinity, with himself, but not very much of himself. We live, act and think at the level of our outward appearance and our social personality, which is like a mask interposed between us and ourselves, between us and others. We live like a 'double' of ourselves rather than as our true self. Habit alienates us from ourselves, blind reflexes guide us. What is needed for the moment is revival. Modernity has dig its own grave and now people are looking for something new.

As part of the renewed quest for something new people are moving towards religions and magic in search of an answer. There are philosophers who have supported this quest for the irrational both in philosophical and religious realm. Another factor we find along with this

quest for revival is the increased call for giving due respect for human being and human situation. A great number of contemporary philosophers, especially existentialists, have given considerable attention to the discussion of human person so as to evidence his dignity and value. They always consider the individual human situations in its unrepeatable uniqueness.

11. Conclusion

Throughout human history from the time of Socrates to our own modern era the human race has sought answers to the most fundamental questions of human life: who are we and why are we here? We do believe that the age-old questions, which the great philosophers of human history have asked for over twenty five hundred years, have greater value even in this age of science and technology. To be human being is to ask these questions. If we human beings are material bodies, if we are only meaningless collections of atoms, it is nonetheless the case that we are the only known collections of atoms in the universe that can reflect upon the universe and ask such questions as, what is real and what does it mean to be human being? But great philosophers of the ancient past are not hollow men, they are filled with enormous vitality and with the profound convictions that it is of fundamental importance to raise these questions and to answer them in the way they do. These great philosophers are the source for us to combat the problems, which we are facing today.

What we need today is to have life itself, its meaning and relative values, interpreted for us. This has always been philosophy's task, which has sometimes been defined as the cultural study of meanings and values, or as the interpretation of life. What we need in the present moment is an image of man himself that bears a new, stark, more nearly naked and more questionable aspect of man.

COURSES ON INDIAN PHILOSOPHY: AN EVALUATION

D. Varghese[♦]

Generally the courses on Indian Philosophy begin with the study of *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Bhagavad-Gita* and a brief introduction about *Jainism* and *Buddhism*. In the second stage the six classical systems of *Nyaya*, *Vaishsika*, *Sankhya Yoga*, *Mimamsa* and *Vedantic* philosophies are deeply discussed. At the final stage, some of the seminary studies go for contemporary Indian philosophy. Studies related to the philosophy of Radhakrishnan, Sri. Aurobindo, K.C. Bhattacharia, Mahatma Gandhi, etc. become parts of the syllabus.

In the history of Indian Philosophy, leaving aside the Indian admirers, we find good many foreigners who loved very much the ancient Indian wisdom. Some of them are Max Muller, Albert Sweitzer, Paul Deussen, Zaehner R.C., Eliade Mircea, and others. A few of them have spent their very good portion of lives in India, made deeper research for several years and brought out Indian wisdom known to the whole world. Their appreciation and admirations had gone beyond words, besides they aroused the cotemporary Indian thinkers to study Indian philosophy with greater enthusiasm and meaning. In the contemporary period Indian thinkers like Radhakrishnan, Vivekananda etc tried to clear the inconsistencies and difficulties proposed by some of the Europeans, and tried their best to give an universal acceptance.

Rationality & Plurality, as Real Foundations of Indian Philosophy

Of its own nature Indian philosophy was neither biased nor too narrow. It has proved itself to be rational and pluralistic in its outlook. According to Dr. Radhakrishnan and many others in spite of its deep-rooted ness in Indian religion and tradition, it remained as a pluralistic and rational Philosophy. To quote from Radhakrishnan, " Reason freely questions and criticizes the creeds in which men are born. That is why the heretic, the skeptic, the unbeliever, the rationalist and the free thinker, the materialist and the hedonist all flourished in the soil of India".1 Again, "From the beginning Indian philosophers felt that truth was many sided

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and different views contained different aspects of truth which no one could fully express. He was therefore tolerant and respective of other views. He was fearless in accepting even dangerous doctrines so long as they are backed up by logic".2

Carvaka, the materialistic school too had its own rationale. Its theory had a good deal to do with the repudiation of the old religion of custom and magic. Here too Dr. Radhakrishnan observed that, "Liberal efforts at improving existing institution sanctioned by time and embodied in the habits of people will remain ineffectual if the indifference and superstition of the countries are not shaken up by an explosive force like the *charvaka* creed. The removal of dogmatism, which it helped to effect, was a necessary to make room for the great constructive efforts of speculation".3 Going a step further, Radhakrishnan justified the atheistic tendency of the *Carvakas'* saying, "...the acceptance of Good God naturally goes with the moral government of the world. When suspicion of the nature of life on earth arises, the belief in God is weekend".4 *Buddhism* and *Jainism* deny the existence of an intelligent first cause; possess clergy practicing celibacy and think, it sinful to take the life of any creature for any cause. Adding the views of many other contemporaries we may conclude that rationality and pluralism of thoughts were the earlier special marks of Indian philosophy, it neither confined itself to a single monistic system nor extolled religious fundamentalism.

Pluralism, the real face of Hinduism

Religious pluralism has been part of India's life and history for millennia. Hinduism with all its subjects, *Buddhism*, and *Jainism* existed side by side in India for centuries. Only with the arrival of Islam the problem became more acute. Religious individuals tried to go beyond the particularities of Hindu sects and of Islam to establish groups open to all.5

Later, Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772 -1833), through a deep study of Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity, reached the conviction that monotheism was the basis of all religions. Monotheism is the source from which Islam and Christianity draw their unity, strength and social equality. He felt Hinduism in its earlier phases had one Supreme Being alone, idolatry and polytheism entered later on in Hinduism. In fact even a fundamentalist and revivalist like Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1824 -83) believed that

monotheism was the basic teaching of the *Rig Veda Samhita*. Hence from a historical and critical point of view neither the contention of Ram Mohan Ray that the *Upanishads* teach monotheism nor the conviction of Dayananda Saraswati that the *Vedic Samhitas* are monotheistic in character can be sustained.6 But most of the educated Hindus of their time accepted this basic tenet of the two great reform movements because it put Hinduism on a par with the other two religions. Even later, some of these thinkers realized that for a healthy, moral, social, and religious life, monotheism was essential. Gandhi also came closer to this tradition. Although he did not write explicitly on monotheism, his basic belief was monotheistic.7

Otherwise, pluralism existed even with the Gods of Hinduism. Any name any shape that appeals to the worshipper can be taken as a representation or manifestation of divinity. Alain Danielou shared the same opinion; but at the same time, he felt, the narrow outlook was due to over emphasizing some monistic school of philosophy. Hence he observed, "In the general picture of later Hinduism an exaggerated importance has been attributed to some philosophical schools of monistic Hinduism which developed mainly under the impact of Islamic and Christian influences and which aim at interpreting *vedic* texts in a new light".8 He would add along with that, "However the tendency toward monism never had had in practice a deep influence on the forms of hindu worship, a simplified system cloud never accommodate the multi faced complex unity, that characterizes the hindu pantheon, when although every element can, form a certain point of view, be equated with every other, the whole can never brought back to numerical unity".9 It is to be sadly remarked that, while Hinduism is one among the world religions, known for its profound scriptures, its highly contemplative and spiritual traditions, its spirit of tolerance, its perennial values and philosophical insights, *hidutva* is a closed and exaggerated ideology.10 On the other hand for a student of philosophy, if the innumerable Gods and their assistance to human beings, respect for nature, coexistence with nature, some of these elements are emphasized it could have satisfied his rationality. The ideology of Trinitarian Gods (Brahman, Vishnu, Shiva) and their availability to human needs may be a matter of interest and relevance for clerical students. Thus a student will be able to relate, compare and

contrast his faith with his native land Gods. This may lead to an appreciation of his religion and respect for others faith.

Hindutva Ideology; a Non-pluralistic Frame

Vinayak Damodar Sevarkar (1883-1966) a Maharastrian *brahmin*, codified a social and political doctrine known as 'Hindutva' and published its essential ideas in the book "Hindutva: who is a Hindu?" 1923. He affirmed that hindus constitute a single nation and asked them to build up a Hindu- *Rashtra* in order to maintain, protect and promote the interests of the hindu race. An appreciation for and practice of all the customs and traditions of Hinduism, acceptance of India alone as ones fatherland and holy land and Sanskrit as the common language are some of the basic tenets of Hindustan. *Buddhism, Jainism* and *Sikhism* are to be treated as off shoots of Hinduism only. Birth and growth in Indian territory, are the marks of belonging to the Indian race.

In recent years the fanatic hindus have intensified their efforts to change our country into a monotheistic *hindutva* model. Their efforts have gone to the extent of committing innumerable atrocities, on *dalits*, tribals, Muslims & Christians. Such acts of violence and their ideology destroy the very democratic, secular and civilizational fabric of our society and erase the pluralism that undermines the unity of our nation. Quite fittingly it is noted that, 'the fundamentalists' treatment of Hinduism as a uniform and monolithic entity (which it is not and which it never has been) has led to a process of "semitization of Hinduism", threatening the culture of millennial religious pluralism and co-existence. It is this *'semitized`* Hinduism which is today locked in conflict with two semitic religions - Islam and Christianity".11 Thus it is imperative for all philosophers who are concerned with the secular future of our nation to challenge these puzzlements. The above feeling is expressed as, "The challenge has been Hindutva ideology with much minorities especially Christians, have shown their disagreement. This ideology destroys the very foundation of our nation.... The country requires a philosophical reflection on the implication of Hindutva".12

Power Politics in Indian Philosophy

For some of the critics the authority of the *Vedas* is so crucial in Indian Philosophy that, *vedic* knowledge was given absolute status. *Vedas* are accepted as eternally heard, revealed truth and the most authentic one. This lead to a non-theocentric division as *orthodox* and *heterodox*. Ritual power is another area of domination in the *vedic* literature. *Yajnas* were understood to have superior power than the deities worshipped in *vedic* hymns. Belief has gone to the extent that even the deities could be controlled and made to serve the purpose of *yajna* performers. In this context Hiriyanna observes, "It was rather to compel or coerce them (the deities) to do what the sacrificer wanted to be done".13 Hiriyanna gives clear evidence to the superiority of *yajnas,* which is for a political game in power struggle. As he says it, " ... as a sign of the transfer of power from Gods to the priests"(Brahmins).14 As if supporting this, in course of later development, *Mimamsa* became the specialized discipline for upholding and interpreting the *vedic* mantras and *yajnas* as the only source of power and potentiality.

Here for our purpose, an important element to note is that the *vedic* society acknowledged *brahmacharya, grahastha, vanaprasta* and *sanyasa* as four stages of life. Among these, concepts like *sanyasa* and *brahmacharya* are typically Indian and clerically important but has absolutely no place in our philosophy syllabus. In Bhagavad-Gita and Upanishads, *sanyasa* has special meaning as the vow of renunciation.

Again, *Upanishads`* period is acknowledged by all as one of the most intensive periods of intellectual activity. Yet here too knowledge is brought in terms of power relations. *Upanishad* wisdom is highest knowledge. Consequently it separated the elite upper class from the lower simple people. As it is said by Hirryanna, the word, " *'Upanishad'* literally means 'secret teaching' *(rahasya)* or the teaching which was jealously guarded from the unworthy and was imparted in private, only to pupil of tried character"15 We have clear evidence of the above criterion when S. Radhakrishnan, the contemporary philosopher said, meditation, worship, ritual are in tented for the lower class of aspirants who have no desire for earthly prosperity or heavenly job. Again according to him, people are sealed with distinction of upper and lower class even in the realization of *mukti*. That is the reason he went on saying, there are two kinds of release.

One is the result of *yajna* or wisdom, and the other is due to *upasana* or worship and prayer.

It is to be noted here that, Upanishad has a second meaning as sitting near the master and listening. The concept of '*guru*', '*sishya*' (to be trained), '*ashram*', '*gurukula*' etc have not yet found place in our syllabus.

Never undermining the Vedanta study, we appreciate the meta-theory of *'tat vam asi'*. It should be kept in mind that it is one of the philosophies, but certainly not the only philosophy. Monistic interpretation of *Vedanta* may go for singularity, rigidity and fundamentalism. If it is held too high, the spontaneity, rationality and the plural nature of Indian philosophy may be totally lost. It is true, during 20th century Vedanta started gaining the moment of militancy. The metaphors of *dharma yudha* of Bhagavadgita and Sakti (Kali) were added along with it and interpreted not merely to serve the freedom movement, but also to counter the Islamic concept of *jihad*, the holy war. It was taken up to revert the supposition that the Hindus were inert and passive. The post independence tendency of *Vedanta* is continuously to serve the purpose of the Hindu communalism against the Muslims and Christians. Recently the *hidutva* politicians transferred the otherwise polite figure of Rama into a militant one.16

In the later half of the 20th century Vedanta studies in the academic circles as well as reverted back to the orthodox positions dismissing the limited and liberal stances it apparently exhibited during the freedom movement. Rigorous translations and interpretations of *advaidic* texts insisting upon the pure or absolute form of *vedanta* came forefront. The head of Kanchi Sankaracharya mutt accused the liberal compromises of the Brahmins with the modern forms of life and called them back to the original orthodox way of living. Popular writers like Cho Ramasamy recited the same theme and criticized the liberalization and modernization of the *vedantic* elites.17 It is during the same period certain literary critics and creative writers condemning the popular culture as corrupt and defunct. These circumstances in the second half of the 20th century helped to rejuvenate the most orthodox forms of Vedanta. Revival of *Advaita* goes hand in hand with the program of making Hindu militancy of the communalists.

Interface between Knowledge & Power in the Formulation of Indian Thought

Ideology means not mere existence and establishment of certain ideas, but it is a kind of material force, which determines the social behaviour in general at certain periods. In a given society the dominant mode of meaning generation takes place within the dominant ideology. Thus knowledge itself gets turned into ideology, and ideology in turn supports power. In the Indian context, the *hindutva* ideology has been justifying the *Vedic* superiority and caste hierarchy. According to Dr. P.K. Pokkar, in one of his paper on "Role of power and knowledge in the formation of Hindutva says the decision to rule India by her own rules by warren Hastings was not a casual decision. Charles Wilkins began to study Sanskrit and then started translating the institutes of Manu. Wilkins also became the first person to translate Bhagavad-Gita. The intention of the Europeans was to ensure the favorable material and ideological condition required for their rule in India. For our observation, the dialectics of domination applied consciously and unconsciously influence Indian thought and its study curriculum.

The postmodern philosopher, Derrida has rightly pointed out that, an enquiry into the origin leads to metaphysics and evade the real problem. It would not be an exaggeration to say that Absolute Pure Brahman, the concept of 'thou art that' i.e.; 'thou art not thou', evaded some of the essential problems of the suffering Indians. As a result the world and human being are reduced to illusion and *maya.*

As regards knowledge, productive and practical knowledge were produced by the lower caste of people from their working conditions; whereas the *brahmins* appears to have produced only meta knowledge or meta discourse during their spiritual exercises. Thus it is said that, "It is significant to note that the lives of the great Brahmins of olden times, like Yajnavalkya, are associated with intellectual profundity and spiritual achievement while those of great *khatryas* represent an ethical magnanimity which has love for its guiding principle ...".18 As for the knowledge generated by the lower castes, it was rich in content but was expropriated as soon as the ruling caste identified such knowledge as useful. Actually the expropriation of the knowledge was made possible by means of employing a highly technical language called Sanskrit.

In order to retain the *braminical* order the ruling class wanted to convert everything that evolved within the geographical territory to the *brahminical* language. Gauthama Buddha, who preached against the *brahminic* order and caste, also was incorporated within Hinduism as one of the *avathara.* Buddha is branded as the ninth *avathar* of Vishnu, instead of being regarded as a political thinker and revolutionary of his times.19 *Buddhism* as a whole was converted into Sanskrtized version. Actually the people who were addressed by Buddha, lost access to the philosophy of Buddha as early as it is converted into the so-called divine language. The text produced by Buddha in *Pali* language as well as many other texts related to folk medicine and folk arts were translated into Sanskrit not simply for exalting it but for disarming the people who produced it. What is funny in the Indian context is the recognition of Sanskrit and related culture as superior. With this operation the *non-brahminic* texts get branded as inferior and the very producers of the local knowledge gradually accept the dominant ideology pertaining to the real and higher knowledge. It is high time to realize the place occupied by all such local knowledge that has been marginalized for centuries.

The result is **alienation of the lower people**. The *sudras* were banned even from hearing the Vedas. As Manu says, "Let him not recite the texts indistinctively, nor in the presence of the Sudras".20 Again and again it is insisted that the twice born (*dwija*) alone is entitled to read. Thus the majority of the people are kept away from the right to know. On the other hand their only duty is to obey the *brahmins*. Karl Marx expressed the same idea. For him, the working class gets alienated from their means of production by means of expropriating. Marx says, "The so-called the primitive accumulation, therefore nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production. It appears as primitive, because it forms the pre-historic stage of capital and of the mode of production corresponding with it".21

Need of Pluralistic Philosophy, the Contextual Need

At the venue of *Hidutva* , it is high time to recapture the pluralistic and rationalistic nature of the Indian thoughts. *Anekavada* in *Jainism* literally means that there are multiple realities and there is multiple understanding of realities. With this pluralistic understanding *anekandavada* has to be understood against the doctrine of *ekantavada*,

which came into existence in the context of especially with *vedantic* and Upanishad monistic philosophy.22 In this context Zimmer would say, "Jainism may be regarded as a specimen of the way in which Indian mind, outside the pale of Brahman orthodoxy, and according to the pattern of an archaic mode of thought rooted in Indian soil".23 The *jaina* doctrine of six fundamental categories too speaks in favor of this. The first and foremost category of *Jainism, Jiva* or life is said to be a multiple principle.

The *jainas* consideration of famous six blind men portraying an elephant from their own experience indirectly refers to the six systems of Indian philosophy. This is a *syadvada* mentality. *Syadvada* stands as a **democratic** principle in philosophical and religious perspectives. Hence due importance needs to be given to counter balance the over emphasize of the monistic and *brahminic* thoughts. *Jainistic* concepts of nonviolence as the very basic life style, not only of monks but also indispensable of the lay, needs due consideration in our study, when the whole world and nations are alarmed with terrorism and violence. In short a systematic ethical philosophy of nonviolence is the need of the time.

If the percentage of the Indian *dalit* Christians is too high, and the inequalities of treatment to them are too much, the political philosophy needs to be revisited. *Dalit* means, "the oppressed", or" the broken" people.24 It is to be noted that Buddha and Mahavira are the two *kashtrays*.. Buddha stood high when he reversed the caste order and he said, "Caste is not by birth but by deeds", (inscribed at Bodgaya - when he first saw a Brahmin, after his enlightenment). The ruling power is to be attributed to the *kshatryas*. The caste order normally understood to have the foundation from the Rig Veda, regularized by Manu, today stands at the cross roads in the political philosophy of India. It goes to the conclusion that either the *vedic* foundation is wrong, or the Vedic commands are transgressed. (I mean the *kshatryas* are the authorized people to rule not the BJP & VHP *brahmins* as in Indian politics today). Thus the political philosophy could start from the power struggle background, pass through Buddhistic reformation, taking the guidance of Dr. Ambedkar, E.V.R. Periyar etc. Dr. Ambedkar after experiencing all caste cruelties felt that he was born in Hinduism by mistake but he would see that he would not die as a Hindu. That decision made him to embrace Buddhism and die as a budhist. It is true the Keralites requested

E.V.R.Periyar, to fight against the caste issue at Vaikam. Upruptedly leaving his speech in a meeting at Tiruchirapalli, he left to help the *ezhavas* of Kerala. The caste distinction in India, the rites dispute in the church, and the racial discrimination of the west awaits a solution through a reversed political philosophy.

The concept of '*Dharma*' as justice and righteousness has been given high priority in the thoughts of Buddha. The values of standing for justice, fighting every injustice, good character, protection of the people are the special marks of the *kshatryas*.The conflict over the ruling power between the Brahmins and *kshatryas*, was visible even at that time. It started with *brahminic* ritualism and *kshatryas* character. In this context it is said that, "The idea behind the neo-kshatrya movement cannot be known today in its full meaning, but it is possible to discern the lines of divergence between Brahmin and Kshatrya. That there was naturally a period of struggle between the cult of ritualism supported by the Brahmins, and the religion of love, represented by the kshatryas, is evident."25 Critics like Daya Krishna and some of the Asian thinkers feel that the conflict between the *brahmins* and *kashtrays* for political power is the background of Mahabaratha and Bhagavad-Gita. Hence Bhagavad-Gita is not merely to be understood as three spiritual *margas* of *bhakti, jnana,* and *karma*, but as the possibility of a *kshatriya* philosophy, with a power struggle background. It is to be noted that, Bhagavad-Gita also plays a secondary game of divinely sanctioning caste inequality. (Bhagavad-Gita, XVIII, 42-44).

Search for an Alternative Practical Philosophy

Is philosophical knowledge a set of doctrine with out any practical goal or is it an activity directed towards saving man and mankind from maladies? Again could one think meaningfully? The controversy was already started by Wittgenstein who declared that philosophical activity is like curing a person from mental sickness, a sickness caused by puzzlements, confusions and bewilderments. Wittgenstein said that the old view of philosophy as a body of knowledge or system must be rejected and replaced by a new conception of philosophy as an activity. Hence in Tractatus he wrote, "Philosophy is not a body of doctrine, but an activity"26 Again as the puzzlements are many and each calls for a

different kind of treatment. "There is not a philosophical method, though there are indeed methods like different therapies". 27

One of the most practical philosophies of India is 'Yoga Philosophy'. The word Yoga means 'to join', 'to unity', 'to unite as one', to direct and concentrate one's attention etc. Literally it means "yoking" or "harnessing"- the harnessing or control of ones faculties.28 Thus Yoga means the yoking of all powers of body and mind. This union is affected in and through several areas. This is summarized by Amaladas Brahmachari as union within oneself, union between man and man, union of man with nature and union with the creator.29 Earlier the anxieties of the spiritualists were union with God. In later period we find integrity with one self and with others are important, which could be attained through yoga.

Indian philosophers genuine concerns were, how to free man from suffering. To the curious young philosopher student who finds nothing practical in philosophy, yoga is an answer. If Yoga is well understood, it is trying to offer a solution to the three types of sufferings of *Sankhya, i.e., adhyadmika, adhybaudika,* and *adhideivika,* proposed by *Sankhya.* It is quiet true all most all our problems could be categorized under these headings. While writing a foreword to B.S.K. Iyengar's book, Yehudi Menuhin says, "Each unfulfilled area of tissue and nerve, of brain or lung, is a challenge to our will an d integrity, or otherwise a source of frustration and death".30 It is a technique ideally suited to prevent physical and mental illness and to protect the body generally, developing an inevitable sense of self-reliance and assurance. By its very nature it is inextricably associated with universal laws, respect for life, drawing of a quite breath, calmness of mind and firmness of will.31

Recognizing the importance some of the universities have come forward to offer certificate, diploma and degree courses in yoga, and good many of the physicians rush to this study. Undoubtedly the meditative and spiritual value is great in yoga. In short, it calls for moral and ethical virtues (*yama),* cleanliness (*niyama*), physical exercises (*asana*), detachment (*pratyahara*) attention and concentration (*pranayama, pratyahara, dharana),* meditation (*dyana)* and peace of mind (*samadhi).* 'Peace' is an elusive boon for which many earn these days. This peace of mind is possible through Yoga. Some of the virtues and states of mind are

the fundamental requirements of clerics too. Hence Yogic studies needs to be given grater attention in our studies, at least it could be an ancillary subject to philosophy.

Subaltern Streams in Vedas, Revisited

It is a generally accepted fact that Indian philosophy takes its roots from *Vedas*. But the *vedangas* and *upavedas* need special consideration. There are six *vedangas* and six *upavedas*. The *upavedas* contains practical, relevant materials for all. *Aurveda*-medicine, *gandharvaveda* -music, *artha sastras*-politics & economics, *silpasastras*-architecture, *dhanurveda*-archery & war, are some of the *upavedas*. *Aurveda, Gandharvaveda* and *silpasastras* are very much useful for many especially for trainees in the clerical line. For example, the *vedic brahmines* were not only priests performing religious rites and ceremonies; they also were *vaidyas* (physicians of *Ayurveda*).32 It is clear that the physicians and surgeons of the time were the sages or seers, believed to be deeply devoted holy people, who saw health as an integral part of spiritual life. It is said that they received their training of *Aurveda* through direct cognition during meditation and intuition.

Professional careers like MBBS may be not be agreeable to priestly ministry but the basic Indian mode of alleviating human suffering is still expected from Indian clerics in the basic grass root villages. By doing this as combined program of healing, they prove not only as charismatic healers but also actual holistic healers, suited to their actual needs. Thus they will fulfill the guidance of the church given for formation. Advice is given as follows, "If formation is not suited to their actual needs, the problems would arise from their cultural perepectives".33 The *vedic* sages took the passages from the *vedic* scripture relating to *Aurveda* and compiled separate books dealing only with *Aurveda.* The *Atreya Samhita* is the oldest medical book in the world.34 (The *Arthava veda* lists eight divisions of *Aurveda.* They include, *kayachitkitsa*-internal medicines, *balchikitsa*- pediatrics, *Grahachikista*-demonology, urdhavanchikista-ophthalmology, *salayaxchikista* - surgery, drashta-vishchista-toxicology, *jara-geronntology*-science of rejuvenation, *vrushya-vaijkaram*- sperm etc.)

Aurveda is translated as the art and science of living, a systematic approach, which utilizes all that nature, provides (food, spices, herbal

medicines, colors, metals, sound), not only to overcome sickness but also continually strengthen oneself. *Aurveda* has evolved in a *vedic* culture which understood the human condition to be limitless; the day to day implementation of *Aurvedic* principles create a strong body, clarity of mind and tranquility of spirit, thus the individual may move closer to realizing his true potential.

In the modern world, *Aurveda* is increasingly popular, because it speaks of the elementary concepts of contact with nature, holism and 'we are what we eat'. *Aurveda* forms an integral part of the daily regimen of hundreds of millions of people worldwide. Recently The Week magazine had its cover heading as 'Aurveda goes global'.35 Its principles are utilized, not only to treat persons who are ill, but also to prepare a balanced meal and to construct a harmonious environment. *Aurveda* is the knowledge of what nature in her generosity provides.

Philosophical Implications of Sidha

The word *sidha* comes from *sidhi*, which means an object to be attained, or perfection of heavenly bliss. *Sidhi* generally refers to the *Ashta sidhi* i.e., the eight supernatural powers. Those who attained or achieved these powers are known as *sidhars*. The *sidhars* were a class of popular writers in Tamil in all branches of knowledge and many of their works were written in high Tamil. The poetry, in which medical and other scientific tracts have been expressed, is much admired by specialists of the same field. The *sidhars* were also great scientists. They were men of high culture, intellectual and spiritual faculties combined with supernatural powers.36 The paramount aim and object of *sidha* science is to assure the full span of 100 years of healthy life, to enable man knowledge, cultivate good character and conduct, with which they could enjoy their legitimate worldly pleasures and ultimately attain salvation.

Man is said to be the microcosm and the universe is macrocosm. Because what exists in man, also exists in the universe. Man is nothing but the universe in miniature containing the fire elements and the various principles, which constitute the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. The universe consists of two essential entities - matter and energy, which the *sidhars* call *Siva* and *Sakti*. The two co-exist and are inseparable. The universe consists of five elements and the various principles, which are

primordial elements (*pancha boothas*). All created or evolved matter in the world, whether it is animal, vegetable or mineral, falls under these categories. The human anatomy and psychology, the causative factor of disease the materials for the treatment and cure of diseases, the food for sustenance all fall with in the five elemental categories.

Sidha medical science has a wide range of application in medical and non-medical fields. Social forestry needs to be based on medical value of the plants. Even when water purification of modern methods has drastically failed to provide safe drinking water for the masses, herbal medicines like cleaning nut, herbal antibiotics are widely researched to find a viable alternative.37 Thus the unique *sidha* medicine answers a number of incurable diseases when other medical systems fail.

Conclusion

It is true that in India, philosophy and religion are closely inter related. They can influence each other. Gradual movement of *hindutva* ideals with its monistic frame narrowed down the scope of Indian philosophy and used it also as a tool for domination. This can lead to one religion, one God and one nation ideology, where the minorities will not have any place. Hence the neglected philosophies need to be added along with the study course to balance the puzzling situations. Besides *ahimsa* of Jainism and ethical virtues (*dharma*) of Buddhism are the needs of the time.

Good many of the young philosopher students want philosophy to be practical. Let us bring back to the forefront the practical values of yoga, *aurveda, silpasastra, gandarvaveda, sidha* etc, so that a student may feel there is a mission of alleviating human suffering as a fruit of his philosophical studies. Here, once again we shall not wait for Max Muller and other foreigners to come and 'baptize' our traditional wisdom. Let us take the cautioning words of Fr.Mathew M. Vallipalam O.F.M. Cap. ("Priestly Formation in the Changing Society of Inda") as he says, "In order to get affiliation of western universities, Indian seminaries follow some of the methods, programs and policies of western institutions". He would add saying, "In the process, many of the Indian traditions, customs and spiritual insights are sacrificed". So it is high time to revisit our existing syllabus to set it right, keeping in mind the need of the time.

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INCULTURATION OF THE SEMINARY TRAINING: AN ACTION PLAN

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Introduction

My presentation here is an action plan of the programmes of "inculturation" in the seminary training long contemplated after the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council and to some extent carried out in a number of Indian Seminaries. The concept of *Inculturation* may need more clarification in this regard. *Inculturation* in the Christian vision of formation of the seminarians for he proclamation of the Gospel message is a dynamic process of growing oneself in the cultural milieu of the people and learning to communicate the Good News of the "Project of the Kingdom of God" in the cultural symbolic structures of the people for whom one is a missionary. Inculturation of the seminary programme has many facets, such as living in the culture of a people, sharing their life-style and learning to live with the struggles of life of the people in view of helping them to solve their human problems with Christian ways and means.

Further, *Inculturation* as applied to the process of knowing how to interpret the word of God in the words, symbols and realities of the life of the people is a two way process of growth for a seminarian, namely, assimilation of the Christian message and Christian values of the Gospel into the life of the person in close contact with the culture of the people for whom he is training himself to be a minister of the Word. Then by means of a mutual give and take method assimilating the local cultural body of symbols as the vehicle of the Gospel message, a seminarian should learn to preach, teach and get to know the religious responsiveness of his people in the midst of their other human problems of life. This twofold approach of the Seminarian towards understanding the meaning and message of the Gospel while learning to interpret them to the taste and temperament of the local people is an inculturational programme of training in the field of his pastoral and missionary life.

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The prototype of such inculturational formation of the seminarian is the incarnation event of the Word of God. As St. Paul states in his letter to Philippians 2:7, the humanization of the Word , known as "Incarnation" , the truth that "the Word became Flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14) , itself had been a process of the insertion of the Word of God into the culture of humanity, a self-emptying act of God, indeed, for the integration of the humanity unto God's divinity, an assumption of the human nature and human culture unto the wholeness of the reality of the Word of God , becoming a perfect human being, Jesus of Nazareth, a man like any one of us, becoming a "servant of humanity." This *kenosis* made him feel with the humanity to the extent of fully identifying with everything that is human, except sin (Heb.4: 15). This is the great Christian prototype of *inculturation*, insertion of the Divine into the human in view of bringing about all that is truly human into a divine -human harmony. *Inculturation* of the Gospel message into the cultural values of a people and integrating their positive values into the Gospel message is a continuation of this prototype of the divinisation of human cultures and the values thereof .

This has been proposed as the new Programme of Christian Education, both in the Seminaries and in the Christian Media of Education , formal as well as informal, which the second Vatican Council envisaged in its Constitutions of *Divine Worship, Divine Revelation, Church in the Modern World* and in the decrees of *Church's Mission* and *Church's Relationship with Believers of other Religions*. In order to gear up this new programme of inculturated seminary training in the light of the directives of II Vatican Council in India, we had the great National Seminar, called "Church in India Today" held in Dharmaram, Bangalore, May 15-25, 1969.

Quite a good number of practical resolutions were taken in this National Seminar in view of applying seriously the directives of "inculturation" especially in the areas of the formation of seminarians, renewal of religious life, inter-religious dialogue, liturgical renewal, mission-work, catechetics, Christian leadership training etc. Thirty seven years after closure of the II Vatican Council and thirty three yeas after the National Seminar of "Church in India", we have now another occasion for a retrospection and a prospection of the implementation of the proposed programmes of "inculturation" in seminary training.

1. Culture and Inculturation

In any discussion on the inculturation of the seminary training in India, the implied question raised for the sake of clarity is this : What are the elements of our culture that can be integrated into the training programme of the seminarians in India? The culture of a people is generally described by anthropologists and sociologists as the integral way of people's life, lived with a world view of a "collective unconscious" to which they give traditional submission by means of their language and signs of communications, myths and symbols, customs, traditions and manners, hospitality gestures, beliefs and worship forms, sacrifices and sacraments, rites and rituals, prayers and recitals, annual feasts and festivals, sacred times and auspicious moments, blessings and benedictions, habits and attire, folklores and popular arts, music, dance and dramas, narratives of ancestry, wisdom sayings of the forefathers, mystery celebrations, incantations, ancestor memorials, ethical practices, family occupational traditions, trade and commerce, eugenics and hygiene, habitat adaptation to environments, sense of the sacred space, sacred ceremonies, sacred medicine, futuristic and eschatological imaginations etc.

Inculturation as a programme of insertion of the Gospel values and Christian vision into the above mentioned aspects of human culture has to pay sincere attention to integrate them into a certain perfection according to the human-divine vision of Jesus Christ who came to perfect and not to destroy that which his Father has planted and his Spirit has inspired and nurtured from the foundation of the world and humanity. In the process of inculturation there are four dynamic stages : (i) *presentation* of the Gospel message to a people according to their cultural receptivity, (ii) *interaction* between the cultural values of the people and the message of the Gospel, (iii) *integration* of the message of the Gospel into the life of the people in their cultural symbols, (iv) *hermeneutical enrichment* of the Gospel message itself. At the last stage a missionary develops his own catechesis, homilies, educative tools for his new community as well as programmes of social change, all in tune with the cultural expectations of his new community, and not a blind copying of the Jewish or Geek symbolic texture of the Biblical message. Inculturation thus becomes finally a tool for new hermeneutical enrichment of the Gospel

message itself, as the latter gets "re-incarnated" in the newer human settings of culture, while every culture offers a new *sitz im leben* for the Gospel message to get implanted in new human situation.

By this kind of mutual integration of the Gospel message and the culture of a people, a new Christian community may discover its new way of living quite in line with that of the other participants of the same local culture; and the new Christian community need not feel any cultural alienation from their fellow human beings living as neighbours in the same cultural setting. They together can share a common world vision which is still part of the whole Christian vision of life which is salutary and liberative as well as enriching the life of the whole human community of the local culture, and it also makes the Christian community feel united with their neighbours in all matters human and cultural interactions even though the Christian community may keep their faith identity, as distinct from that of other believers, but lived and expressed in more cultural affinity and good sociality with other people having a common bond of belief in the loving providence of one God who is the "Father figure" of all of them. This is the ideal result of inculturation. How far it has achieved its destined goals especially in mission countries like India is a matter of study, especially after the National Seminar on "Church in India"(1969).We will make this study briefly on some specific areas.

2. Theological Inculturation

"The Church in India"- Seminar of 1969 recommended to theological writers and seminary professors to develop an indigenous theology in the cultural idioms and symbols of India. The recommendation was highly hierarchically motivated as it was phrased as follows: ... " *under the creative guidance of the magisterium* directed by the Holy Spirit, all be encouraged in the spirit of freedom to enunciate our faith in the richness of the Indian traditions, using its thought patterns, concepts and symbols, ... against the background of Indian culture; devout meditation on our spiritual inheritance of the Bible and of Indian Scriptures be encouraged, in order that our faith may be deepened and *a truly Indian theology* blossom out of this experience."[1]

Unfortunately, so far nothing substantially theological in the Indian categories or idioms has come to surface, " *under the creative guidance of*

the magisterium of the Church" in Indian seminary teaching or curriculum planning, as there is not much of' 'culturally respecting India' to expect as "*creative guidance from the magisterium of the Church.*" Theologians themselves, almost all of them, trained abroad and had their doctoral dissertations on some fundamental western theological issues in the historical contexts of the western Christianity are no more promising teachers on theology in Indian perspectives or Indian idioms and symbols. Their mind-set is western and far strange to the burning realities of the suffering millions of people in the Indian subcontinent. Except some professors of Indian Philosophy who are to some extent committed to the understanding of our Indian culture because of their India based higher studies, all others are experts in western philosophical traditions and they repeat parrot like the teachings of the western masters to the students .Therefore, there is not much achieved in Indian-Christian theological or philosophical inculturation as inspiring for our people. May be, another century of anti-Christian challenges from outside the Christian fold in India may awaken in us some new urgency to develop something culturally indigenous and meaningful to Christian existence in India.

3. Inculturation of Arts and Cultural Symbols

Regarding the integration of Indian art forms and symbols 'The Church in India" Seminar recommended to take "*every effort to encourage real literary and artistic talent in our youth and provide a proper formation for them particularly in our schools and colleges so that those who have the talent and vocation may attain personal fulfilment in their way of commitment to Christ.*"[2] The Seminar further elucidated regarding this point that in the development of Indian Christian art, emphasis be laid on the deep spirituality and rich variety of Indian music and dance, on the sense of mystery and symbolism of Indian painting, carving and architecture giving creative expression to the feelings and yearnings of contemporary humanity in India. [3]

In these areas also not much has been significantly achieved, neither in the formation oriented religious institutions nor in the academic programmes of training in a professional way, though some initiatives have been taken in some regional language groups by some educational institutions of Christian management. Nor any significant national level institutes of Christian arts, even for music and dance have come up to cater

to these needs. However, a big leap into the composition of charismatic hymns mostly with the traditional western Christian theological content in many regional languages is a significant contribution of charismatic movement as such. .But hardly there is any Indian wisdom, genius, poetry, imagination and symbolism traceable in any of such hymns, rather most of them are stuffed with mediocre and outdated theological jargons of the medieval European Scholasticism , which boosts up superficial devotional piety.

4. Liturgical Inculturation

The third area of inculturation which the National Seminar of 1969 (Bangalore) strongly recommended was *liturgical inculturation.* In the same national seminar there was one day a celebration of the Indian liturgy *(anaphora)* developed by the liturgical experimentation centre of Dharmaram College, presided over by the late Cardinal Joseph Parecattil .The Seminar participants were very much impressed by the celebration of that liturgy in which the Indian rituals and objects of worship, such as *anjali*(greeting style by folding together both palms), *pranams,*(reverential prostrations) *arati* (triple offering of incense, flower and light) and a *saffron shawl* replacing the Roman and Chaldean vestments were used. The Indian style of peace greeting *(shanti)*, *anaphora* incorporating into the Canon the creation story of the Vedic Scriptures, pauses of silent meditation, benediction in the Indian style etc. were adapted as elements of inculturation. After much appreciative discussion the National Seminar then resolved:

As a first step towards giving our liturgy a more Indian character we recommend that all concerned should, in addition to following an Indian way of life, create an Indian atmosphere in worship, by adopting suitable Indian decorations, postures, gestures etc., by composing prayers and hymns which may also take their inspiration from the cultural heritage of India. [4]

Taking inspiration from this resolution, the Commission for Liturgy of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI) and the National Liturgical Centre at Bangalore (later named as the National Biblical, Catechetical and Liturgical Centre (NBCLC) lead by D. S. Amalorpavadass, introduced a phased programme of liturgical

inculturation on occasions of renewal - seminars at NBCLC. As a preparatory step in view of creating an atmosphere of meditative worship Indian traditional postures of squating, greetings of peace in Indian *"namaskar* " style, objects of worship such as *thali* (plater) for offertory, use of triple *arati* of flower, light and *incense (agarbatti),* veneration of the Bible with flower garlanding and *anjali vandana,* simple saffron shawl replacing chausible or cope etc. were introduced and followed up almost regularly for all Eucharistic celebrations during the various seminars conducted at NBCLC.

The use of indigenous cultural symbols in liturgy was introduced gradually and optionally as people got used to them, and as they discovered the meaning of the native symbols of their cultures of the local Churches. Therefore, the pedagogical and catechetical training of the people for following a new symbolic system in worship replacing the old non- indigenous symbols needed a much awaited pastoral training from the Church administration. For this purpose diocesan pastoral and catechetical centres were set up, and the National Centre (NBCLC) at Bangalore was commissioned with the tasks of animation, co-ordination and extension of expert service to local and regional centres while offering experimental inputs to trainees of various catechetical centres in India ; and these centres, in the course of time, were very helpful and instrumental in implementing the ideals of liturgical inculturation to a great commendable degree in the local churches of the various Ecclesial Communities in India, especially in the local churches of North Indian Missions.

What is yet to be done as an action plan in the seminaries is a systematic training programme in Liturgical Inculturation showing the possibilities of developing new indigenous liturgies and other worship forms in a variety of designs, in which even the believers of other religions also can participate without inhibition and fear; and this may gradually develop inter-religious worship forms in which the entire human family of God living in a particular cultural setting can participate with a wider sense of ecumenical faith-fellowship.

5. The Gurukula Model of Living , Learning and Growing

The insights and structures of the ancient *Gurukula* (house of a

Master) had been often proposed on several occasions, in the National Seminar and thereafter, as the right model for seminary training in India, where the ever present *Guru*, the authentic formator is Jesus Christ, in whose presence and premises the disciples live, learn and grow together with the guidance of a master/ rector physically representing Jesus Christ in a fraternity on the bond of consecrated *brahmacharya, swadyaya, ashrama seva and sravana-manana-nididhyasana* (listening to the teachings of the Master, understanding His vision and mission, and realizing by contemplation the truth of His revelation). In fact the founding fathers of Dharmaram had visualized such a Gurukula model of seminary training here in Bangalore as suitable for the Missionary Church in India. How far this model is achieving it set goals in Dharmaram is a matter concerned observation and revision.

The Indian educational and formative ideals and practices were generally conceived on the principle that they should offer the best scope for the integral development of the individual as their main concern, though it may be argued that the means adopted had not always been as sound as the ends. Formation of a human individual with the appropriate *sadhanas* (means) of self-discipline in tune with the four traditional human values of life, namely, *purusharthas* was the backdrop of the training of students in the ancient Indian *Gurukulas* in general. The disciples in a Gurukula had to follow their own respective individual aptitudinal choice *(adhikaribhedam)* of *sadhanas* for the integration of disciplines and values of life. The Guru, in turn had to help the disciple to discern the appropriate sadhana to suit to the taste and temperament of the latter. A Guru is primarily a spiritual guide of a disciple, and as such he enlightens the disciple regarding the ideal values of individual personal growth as he himself realized to some extent. This had the highest goal of personal growth as the realization of the inner peace *(shanti)* achieved in intimate union or communion with God and maintained as such in some degree of settled consciousness *(stitaprajna)*. However, the sense of the common goal to be achieved by the united fraternal and communitarian growth of all individuals according to certain set model and goal of life with a common mission was absent in the training programme of the ancient Indian Gurukulas. However, Life and its value system had been conceived as one integral whole having various levels of realization, the highest of which being the final liberation of the spirit in man. According to the perception of integration of the various

values of life of an individual to be lived in a community setting as that of a religious congregation as in Dharmaram ,the process of adjustment of oneself to the life-style of the community was not left to chance, or to the raw impulses or instincts of the individual, or to the changing patterns of fashion and fads, but it was planned to have a balance of every human values that contribute to make the life of an individual to grow with healthy disciplines, physical, spiritual, cultural, intellectual and pastoral with a sense of future mission.

In order to achieve some of the finest goals of a religiously disciplined life of the individual, an integral realization of the ideals and values of formative culture as accepted in Indian ways of living was emphasized from the inceptions of Dharmaram vision of religious formation and seminary training. In this the model of Indian *ashram* style of life was envisaged and to a great extent the daily routine of the house was patterned accordingly, with sharing the chores of the house by the students, contributing towards the maintenance of the community by doing significant agricultural activities in the campus, cleaning the premises of the house both interior and exterior and taking up some shared responsibilities of the daily management of the mess and environment etc.

The ancient masters of the *ashrams* of our country strove to impart to their wards a comprehensive plan of learning, meditating, and realizing some of the finest values of life. They construed a scheme of formation with the methods of sharing their forefathers' experience of revealed truths as listened by their *Rshis* and later on transcribed for them as the Vedas and the Upanishads known as *Sruti* (the heard Word); the students in the ashrams had regular reading and meditation over this Word , and this *sadhana* was so well known as *swadhyaya.* Even Patanjali, the great master of *Raja yoga* integrated it as part of *niyama* ,the second step of *ashtanga yoga* with a view to help concentration of the candidate on the Word of God. This is the same purpose instilled in the programme of spiritual exercises to be performed by the candidates by means of daily scriptural reading and meditation thereon.

In complementary perspective, the Christian view of life lived with fraternal bonds in a community of disciples under the tutorship of Jesus as the common Master of all disciples, the above mentioned state of mind (liberated state of consciousness or *stitaprajna)* of a disciple is achieved by

surrendering the goal of his personal fulfilment and all his cherished desires in view of achieving the mission and vision of his Guru, Jesus, whose model and goal of life is translated as far as possible into the life of the disciple. The highest goal-satisfaction of the life of a Christian disciple is this following of Jesus and sharing of his mission .This itself has been conceived as the specific orientation of formation in Dharmaram Gurukulam, where a disciple is invited to aim at a personal realization of the values of life as taught by Jesus the *Sadguru* while cherishing an intense desire to communicate His message of love and service as his life-mission, a mission shared in communion with the other disciples of the same Gurukulam.

Another item of the holistically integrated formation was *nishkamakarma* – doing one's prescribed duties of the community in good spirit and motivation coupled with right disciplines of punctuality, perfection and finish. This was considered to be one of the real achievements of character formation geared in view of achieving the right performance of one's duties (*dharma*) without having much selfish interests as hidden agenda but the service of the human family . This training for the selfless service in the community as well as occasional extension services in the neighbourhood human communities, such as sanatoriums, slums, remand-homes, certified schools, old age homes, hospitals, prisons etc., was planned to be socially service oriented programmes of the holistic vision of formation envisaged in the Dharmaram Vision of integral training. This was also intended for arousing real pastoral consciousness in a candidate for effective service oriented mission in the Church and in the human communities of the nation at large. Training of candidates for selfless and dedicated service for the good of the "people of God" has been considered to be the real mode of holistic formation achieved in a community of fraternity dedicated for realizing the vision and mission of Jesus Christ, the great Master who brought Justice, Peace and Joy, the lasting fruits of the "Kingdom of God on earth"(Rom.14:17).

6. Philosophical Training

Darsanam, the right word for philosophy, had been priced and pursued not for its own sake but for the sake of the final spiritual liberation of the seeker himself. It was conceived and put into action-form as a means for achieving the wholeness and simplicity of human life here on earth

known as *jivanmukti* according to Shri Sankaracharya. This integration was not conceived to be a monovalent orientation to one's own self-satisfaction, rather it had ambivalent opening to the various goals of life (*purusharthas*), all of them ultimately serving the attainment of the supreme enlightenment in life. This is achieved not by denying any of the dimensions of real life but by discovering in every aspect of life the impression of the really Real. Intellectual pursuit on any frontier of knowledge, secular or sacred, should finally terminate at this finishing point which makes sense and meaning to any discipline, even to medicine and archery, music and dance, economics and politics; and hence these are all classified under the eighteen sastras of the Vedic tradition of education.

Philosophical training in the Gurukulas of ancient India was never a mere information flow from the teacher to the student, but a transformation process of the seeker of wisdom (*jijnasu*) sharing the vision *(darsanam)* of the teacher while aiming at realizing (*sakshatkaram)* the truth one seeks and discovers. Experiencing the truth rather than objectifying it was the major concern of philosophical enquiry. It was not a coaching for a career to make a living as it is usually the case in the contemporary Indian Universities. It was a matter of cultural discipline of a person who belonged to a group of enlightened people who lived and worked in a society with some common goal to achieve, such as *lokasamgraha* (welfare of the world). The ideal set-up for such a socially oriented educational programme was also a *Gurukula*, a community of disciples living with a master. Education was not a mere "reading test" nor a "listening submission" nor a "correspondence course", to obtain some degree of nominal value. Intellectual training was integrally linked with spiritual realization and orientation for right and dutiful action for the welfare of the people. This was the cultural expectation of a meaningful education imparted to common people enabling them to discover meaning for everything they observe and do.

In this scheme of value oriented philosophical training, nothing was considered to be alien that alienates a true seeker of truth from reaching the ultimate realization of the Truth, that enlightens everything else in proper perspective. Hence the most fundamental question often asked to the seeker of truth by his teacher was this : "What is that, knowing which everything else is known." This was also the ultimate question of every seeker of Truth, who wanted to discover the meaning of his search and his struggle

for the liberation of his earth-bound life. Rationality and its critical application was central to all branches of *darsanic* pursuits. Nyaya and Vedanta darsanas are typical critical sciences of epistemology and theology. Hence philosophical pursuits in Indian culture had been ever an open ended path of search for higher and higher wisdom.

7. The Dynamics of Teaching and Learning

Regarding the dynamics of teaching and learning, the time-old method of inquisitive enquiry *(jijnasa)* into the objectivity of realities under observation *(pratyaksha)* and the method of meditative realization of the truth of revelation (*Sruti / Sabda*) had been proved to be very effective in an interactive way of teaching and learning, both by the teacher and the student in view of understanding and realization of the truth of the realities seen, heard, touched, smelt and tasted as well as intuited upon. As a starting point of rational enquiry into the truth, meaning and value of realities observed by the enquirer a full scale use of the five senses *(panchendriyas)* of the human person has to be employed in order to get a comprehensive perception of the details of the realities under observation. This is an integral part of the holistic approach to learning by direct exposure to realities. Then some introspection into one's own inner level of consciousness opening it towards the grasp of the truism of the same realities affecting the enquirer, accompanied by reflection on the meaning of both the objective and the subjective inter-relationship of realities which are open to the observer, followed by silent contemplation in view of realizing the relevance and value of the realities to one's own life in relation to the life of all fellow beings, has been the full holistic method applied in the *Gurukulas* of our country for forming the intellectual bent of mind of the students. This holistic method has its prime model in the Indian Upanishadic style of teaching and learning, which consisted of three important steps : *sravanam* (listening/ seeing / touching etc.), *mananam* (grasping / understanding) and *nididhyasana* (contemplation / realization). It is at the third step of the realization of the realism of reality that one gets *darsanam* , an experience of a vision of the wholeness of Reality as related to oneself. This method has to be applied in both philosophical and theological training in our seminaries so that our seminarians may become persons endowed with experienced knowledge and become "men of wisdom."

8. Theological Formation (*Brahmajijnasa)*

Coming to the theological formation we may observe the following salient features specifically to be insisted having in view the future mission of the Church in India as well as the concerns of the Universal Church and that of other Ecclesial Communities the world over. Before stating the details of the above mentioned missiological , dialogical and ecumenical concerns of the Church in India, which have to be well taken care of in the theological formation, let me point out some of the spiritual dispositions that are supposed to be acquired by the candidates in the tradition of Indian spiritual culture . Basically this is part of what is known as 'faith-vision' in Christian tradition and 'spiritual dispositions' in the Indian Spiritual formative traditions. The spiritual dispositions I mentioned here are known as a package of fourfold *sadhana* , known as *sadhana chaturshtaya* as pre-requisites for *Brahmajijnasa* (enquiry into the knowledge of God / theological investigation). They are : (i) *nityanitya* vastu *viveka* (discernment between the eternal and the non-eternal realities), (ii) *phalatrushna vairagya* (detachment from the desire for rewards of actions here and hereafter),(iii) *shadsampath* (practice of the sixfold virtue), and (iv) intense desire for spiritual liberation (*mumukshutvam).* The six virtues(*shadsampath*) that a candidate of *Brhmajijnasa* must cultivate before the commencement theological investigation are : (1) *sama* (calmness),(2) *dama* (self-control), (3) *uparati* (detacahment from sensuality),(4) *titiksha* (ability to balance views even of the opponents), and (5) *sraddha* (faith – faith in the teacher and in the revelation) (6) *samadhana* (peace of mind). Without acquiring these pre-requisites one shall not venture upon theological investigation; because besides being an intellectual discipline, theology itself has been respected in Indian spiritual culture, as the most sublime means (*sadhana)* for the realization of the ultimate truth of life while reflecting over it. Theology in this perspective has been considered as a meditative reflection on and realization (*sakshatkaram)* of the revealed truths of life with reference to the ultimate Reality, God., who is ever living, ever revealing and ever present every where.

Theology is also a faith guided reflection on all truths related to human life in relation to this world and ultimately to God. A theologian cannot be a detached speculator on the truths of life distancing himself from the truths that affect his own life and that of the community of believers to

whom one is interpreting the truths of life in the light of Divine Revelation. In other words a theologian must also be a fellow believer with his community, share the faith concerns of the community and live it authentically as a witness to the community. Hence such theologising must be holistic in nature which takes into account both the aspects of life and the demands of faith-vision , as well as the factual knowledge of the realities of life and related human situations. This will require from the part of the theologian a sequence between theory of reality and theory of morality (rules of action). The former is generally defined as the vision of life while the latter is described as the scheme of actions to be performed in view of achieving the goals of life. This implies the fact that true learning is aimed at achieving perfect harmony between the perception of truth and its application in actual life. Such a scheme takes holistic view of the fact that life includes also death and both form the whole truth of living one's life authentically. This gives an integral vision of life as well as a sense of proportion in which the theoretical and the practical, the physical and the spiritual, the perishable and the permanent interests and values of life are clearly defined and proportionately differentiated in actual life.

A theologian or even an ordinary believer cannot live his/her life meaningfully unless the person has some glimpse of the whole scheme of life with regard to its origin, growth and final dissolution into something whole about which one can think holistically. He would take the biological process of human life in the context of the total life-process and in relation to one's authentic inner self as well as the final goal of human life .Accordingly one has to situate the theological studies in the context of these perceptions, and according to the depth and breadth of one's vision of the ultimate values of life. In fact this can be obtained only by means of some contemplation i.e., constant meditative awareness and reflection on the truths of life and value based actions. Thus a student of theology must devote himself/herself not only to the critical study of the most fundamental and ultimate truths of life but also to the meditative realization of the same in prayerful submission for the grace - touch of the Revealing God.

Theological investigations, as they deal with the transcendental truths of human life in relation to God, should elevate a person to grow beyond one's petty individual interests in view of preparing oneself for the liberating enlightenment of others who are in the confusion of doubts, lack

of faith, and lack of self-confidence for facing the odd realities of life. Since a priest must develop a personality for the service of the people of God during his theological training, individualistic concerns and all allied feelings of selfish motivations must give way to wider participatory understanding and action-forms. But such participatory method of life may not result from the one-dimensional pursuit of objective knowledge which is discursive, which makes man more and more oriented to the analysis of matter and not to the discovery of the synthesis of matter and spirit in a unit-whole. This discovery of the wholeness of human life in relation to God and all God's creation is holistic theology which has tremendous significance in the socio-cultural and spiritual perspectives of human life in India today.

In general the Indian philosophical and theological traditions always held that the human person is a psycho-somatic-pneumatic integral whole which comprises elements from the three spheres of reality which is described as *jiva-jagat-atman*. The individual has to realize in oneself the convergence of this tripolar reality by awakening his consciousness about the complementary composition of one's very being, one's inner potentiality to grow and be transformed unto the one unity whose centrality, focus and nucleus is God. God -experience (*Isawaranubhava)* ,then, for a theologian must be an integral part of his life and reflection, preaching and catechising. With such an integral experience of the unity of reality attained by a student of theology, he has to overcome the inhibitions of scepticism often caused by pure rationalization. Theological education in this sense is also a means for achieving a high spiritual culture with the ingredients of the gift of faith supported by right reason which will harmonize a whole lot of value systems in relation to the various aspects of Christian existence. In view of realizing such a harmony of values, a more experiential approach to theological education than an abstract and speculative one has to be encouraged consistently.

9. Theologising Ecologically

Just as theological training involves achieving harmony with one's own interior and exterior realms of being, so also, it involves environmental harmony with Nature and its rhythm of successive mutations. A human being must learn many things from his/her natural habitat. The universe is perhaps the greatest library filled with unwritten but powerfully eloquent source of learning. The ancient masters used numerous objects of this

Nature as illustrations of great mysteries. They were converted into parables and symbols which demonstrated the hidden mysteries of highest learning and speculation. In order to learn from the Nature one should not do violence to his living environment, nor disturb the rhythm of ecological balance. Instead, a theologian must learn to listen to the humming of the dawn , to meditate with the silence of the dusk, to arise with the twilights, to sing with the sparrows in the early dawn, to be appreciative of the colour splashing of the horizons, to feel the pulse of life in the budding saplings in the field; he should also raise his eyes to the heavens and search for the seat of the all pervading One, hidden in the clouds or dissolved in the transparency of the electro-magnetic field of the Space between the stars, planets and asteroids or traversing in the immense milky ways, meditate on the abyss and expanse of the ocean, sense the glamour of the radiant rays of the Sun and the chills of the winds and wonder at the drops of dews at the tips of the blades of grass, because all these bear the foot prints or the finger tips of that One after whom we are all in search.

Nature communicates numerous messages about its Creator to those who are open to listen, see, touch, taste and smell, understand and realize patiently. In India ancient village schools, *gurukulas*, *parnasalas*, and *vidya-peethas* of higher learning were situated on the banks of rivers or in the valleys of the mountains and in the woods near the villages. In all these places man was placed for learning in the laps of Nature offering him scope to grow in response to the challenges of Nature. Alone in the woods or pastures, man gets emotive responses in the form of fear, wonder, joy, or peace which all reawaken in him the consciousness of being authentic to himself , which he would otherwise loose, if at all he had it at any time any where. Such an environmental congeniality of Nature in which an educational centre is situated, helps the students to eliminate the disharmonies and tensions of inner life by providing scope for reflection, meditation, self-integration and deeper awareness of one's alignment with the totality of Reality which manifests in diverse forms in the Cosmic order.

10. Guru -Sishya Relationship

A fourth ideal that made ancient Indian educational system more effective and meaningful was the intimate relationship a teacher and student maintained between themselves. This relationship was initiated by a religio-spiritual ceremony called *upanayana*, meaning "leading near" (the teacher).

This was not a registration formality as it goes in today's schools and colleges, but an initiation ceremonial which was meant for building an intimate relationship between two strange persons who would later become so intimately related for a common purpose namely the promotion of learning and realization of wisdom. The help of the teacher was not a superfluous one, but a necessary guidance for the student to help himself. In this way education was conceived very much a transformation process, and hence very much an inter-personal affair between a teacher and a student.

Experience of the Master was a source of inspiration for the student and not an imposition on him. The pupil had to work hard sometimes in utter loneliness so that he might discover himself to be in the vicinity of the All pervading and permeating Reality of the Divine. The teacher was not a sculptor, but a model of spiritual enlightenment. The student himself was the sculptor of his own personality, to be formed out of his realization of the unity of all realities converging in himself in so far as he is open to the One present in all. In doing so the teacher's own experience served as an inspiration as well as a model giving hope of success for the student to strive for his own set ideal of perfection and not that of the teacher. The supposition in this process is that there is only One Reality or One Wholeness , that links up all aspects of life towards its perfection. Models of achievement, either of the teachers or of the friends (*satirthya*), are helpful indicators for a sincere student on the way to his realization of the harmony of life.

According to the accepted tradition of holistic leaning process handed down from ancient *Gurukulas* to our generation is the understanding that , only one-fourth of the entire knowledge *(padavidya)* can be obtained from the instructions of the teacher*(gurumukhat)*; and another quarter from the sharing of the wisdom earned by the fellow-friends *(satirthya – samsargat),* and a third quarter of the expected knowledge is to be worked our by the self-study of the aspirant himself *(swadhyayat)* , and the remaining fourth quarter of knowledge is to be obtained in the course of one's life-passing (*kalantare)* . Hence the share of the teacher's role is as significant as one's own effort or the help of one's fellow –friends. But much more than the quantity of objective informational knowledge, the experiential and personal communication of the teacher to the pupil is of higher educative value. It

implies more of a transference of realized knowledge called "wisdom" to the transparent consciousness of the pupil ; this share of the teacher's wisdom has been euphemistically known as *gurutvam* - "blessing of the master", the good pleasure of the master spontaneously imparted to the pupil, as a sharing of master's patrimony of enlightenment which cannot be obtained from any other source. This links the pupil to the teacher's heritage of a rich wealth of wisdom - experience that comes down from a long lineage of great masters of learning (*parampara*).This tradition of learning directly from the experience of a master, though acclaimed very ideal in the past, in the present technocratic communication flux students go after gadgets which will substitute listening to a teacher in a class room set up; and they are least interested in discussing with a professor personally and get a share of the expertise of a professional teacher. This tendency has become contagious in almost all areas of learning , and philosophical or theological studies are no exception, and for that matter the students of Dharmaram are also submissive to this impersonalised mode of learning in philosophy and theology and all allied subjects, tapping the alien sources of Internet and other audio-visual cassettes and compact discs, distancing themselves more and more from personalized learning process with the help of a teacher, or teacher guided media.

Another factor of great significance in theological studies as search for the knowledge of God with the help of a teacher is the facility to hear "God the Word"(*Sabda Brahman*) resonated from the oral recitation of the teacher. This was so very urgent when the ancient lores of wisdom were committed to posterity mainly by oral transmission before writing became the common media of communication. Sound by itself has its own power to strike the memory much more than visualization. Even today instructions given by native primary school teachers to their little kids to read their lessons loudly early morning or in the late evening when the domestic environment is quiet is reminiscent of the ancient practice of loud recitals (*parayanam*) in the *gurukulas* with the help of the master who knows to articulate every word with proper accent, intonation and rhythm with the simultaneous understanding of the sense and nuances of the words, especially when there was no vowel system or diacritical marks for correct pronunciation of consonants in the early stages of classical languages like Sanskrit. The teacher almost created, as it were, the sense and meaning for the words of the texts of the Scriptures. This was indeed done in the most interpersonal

and intimate way between the teacher and the pupil, a great value of education which is now almost disappearing not only from schools and colleges but even from our seminaries and theological faculties , where we should have kept a few pennies in the balance sheet on the credit side of our various experimentations. But, alas! the balance sheet of the net account of our various well intentioned experiments is on the diminishing scale, not yet reached the zero point, and hence re-workable in newer ways with new means of experiments accommodating to the new challenges of theological training.

11. Interactive Methods of Learning and Teaching

In Indian *Gurukulas* from very ancient times we trace out some of the very effective methods of teaching and learning which are teacher-student interactive as well as student – student dialogical in nature and application. Very often these methods of interactive nature are considered to have been invented, as it were, by some "Western Genius" and imported to our country as new discovery by some western educational specialist who may even claim "intellectual patency "over it . But the simple truth is that the following teaching and learning methods are as time old as the Indian Gurukula systems, where our Upanishadic masters so skilfully experimented these methods with great success , and they continued to hand them down from generations to generations for continued application in effective teaching and learning. These methods also developed acoustic taste for rhymal chanting and fast memorization, meditative reasoning, contemplative rumination, and the art of creative and critical commentary writing bringing out all possible nuances and evocative meanings of the cryptic expressions of the wise men of intuitive vision.

(i) Inquisitive Discourse (*Prasnottara*)

The art of questioning and answering *(prasnottara),* otherwise known as "inquisitive dialogue" was effectively employed not only in teaching but also in dialectical discourses on serious matters of philosophical or theological interest. *Kena Upanishad* even adopts its name from the very question with which it starts its enquiry into the origin, constitution and end of this cosmic order. This method helps the teacher as well as the student to explore the various issues of the problem under investigation more critically and with curiosity to know more in detail and with clarity and precision.

This method had been employed practically by all great masters in all known ancient cultures. The style of inquisitive dialogue was almost a literary genre of classical Sanskrit literature.

(ii) Debate (*Samvada*)

Conferences of elites and argumentative discussions among enlightened scholars were common forums of social education .These types of exchanges of views were known as debates (*samvada)*, often organized by great teachers of certain *gurukulas* as well as by enlightened Kings in their royal courts for the entertainment and the enlightenment of the inmates of the royal family , and often such royal *durbars*, as they were called officially, were also open to the enlightened public consisting of poets, philosophers and statesmen. They were the early models of modern seminars or panel discussions or party debates and even of parliament debates. Such debates, discussions, scholarly discourses and public recitals among teachers of various schools of thought swayed over the intellectual climate of this country in the past. Sri Sankaracharya's record of winning in such debates on philosophical questions have gone into our cultural history in indelible letters. Miniature forms of such debates , seminars and planned discussions on serious topics are very useful methods of teaching and learning in a group dynamic way which are always interesting and never make any body bored .Interactive methods in teaching and learning introduced in Dharamaram almost from her beginnings of systematic academics has been vigorously followed up to date.

(iii) Nature-Visualizations (*Dharana)*

Almost all masters of Indian pedagogy applied nature- visualization as a very effective technique for teaching. It may be recalled here that the pedagogy of Jesus is full of nature- visualizations. Every bit of theoretical insight had been primarily drawn from the realities of the natural environment of his movements, his world of ordinary peoples' living milieu. When such insights are transmitted to the disciples the master again referred back to the realities themselves and interpreted his insights using the most simple and natural realities of this world as symbols. This is a pedagogical conversion of reality into a symbol and vice versa, a technique so well artistically manipulated by the ancient teachers of India for effective communication, taking into account the aptitude of students. Continuous

use of illustrations as symbols and parables, as in *Panchatantra, Hitopadesa and the Puranas*, are typical examples of the natural visualization techniques quite often employed by the teachers and commentators for facilitating the understanding of the students. The moral and religious motifs of such illustrations were easily grasped by the students. Examples are so numerous in the writing of the great teachers of the Indian classical schools of philosophy, that we need not venture to bring in an array of them here.

(iv) Illustrative Logic

Depending on the *adhikaribhedam* (aptitude-difference) of the aspirants of knowledge, the teachers applied illustrative logic in expounding abstract doctrines. Proceding from the concrete visualizations to abstract derivations the masters of ancient Indian *darsanic* schools often applied a combined system of logic having the benefits of both induction and deduction. The *pancavayavi nyaya* (inference in five propositions) is so well known in the Indian logic as the typical example of illustrative logic. Even in strict logical derivations which are usually abstract in nature the usefulness of illustration has been correctly understood and applied, a thing which Aristotle did not care very much in his syllogism. The system of logic best suited for pastors and spiritual guides is the *nyaya* of classical Indian philosophy and not Aristotle's deductive logic. I feel that in our seminary training the basic courses should be initiated with a thorough grasp of the Indian system of logic and illustrative methods. They presently get only a marginal treatment in our curriculum as far as I could survey in many of our Indian seminaries.

12. Contemporary Challenges demanding a Holistic Curriculum Planning

We are living in an age of tremendous changes in every sphere of life. Communication technology and management skills make human life and its opportunities beyond all calculations and predictions. The social demands from a theologian-preacher-teacher- administrator- prophet –priest are so much that it is high time to think about our Seminary training programmes in more holistic terms, i.e. taking note of the function of every unit or part of our social means of communication and management skills to get integrated in the curriculum of the academic programme of training personnel for the service of the people of our country while helping them to

form themselves to be useful and efficient ministers of the Church. Appropriate subjects selected from specialized areas of mass media, management studies and other social sciences have to be included in the curriculum of future seminary system for effectively equipping the future ministers of the Church for meaningful service for the people of God, while in no way minimising the need of the spiritual *sadhanas* in which a priest has to be thoroughly trained .

I have argued here that in the planning of the curriculum for the students of the contemporary seminary system an integrated vision of life had be proposed as goal setting. Though the ultimate concern is spiritual realization , our Indian masters thought it was necessary for students to know also the value-scale of other realities of this world including that of economics and politics, sexuality and eugenics. Hence *Arthasastra*, *Kamasastra* etc., were made part of the study programme of the students. The integral approach to the value system according to the scale called *purusharthas* (human values) has been the underlying force and the anticipated goal of training. The ideal of *stitaprajna* to be achieved by a balanced way of life of renunciation as well as of right enjoyment of the goodness of this world assures eternal peace also. This had been the integral ideal of education for life and the systems implied a corresponding psychology of integration of all values in life: reading, learning and work (manual and menial), meditation, prayer and performance of one's dutiful action for the co-ordination and development of the society (*lokasamgraha*) were all conceived to be integral ingredients of a holistic approach to the training of students. Some of these aspects were completely given up or even forgotten by modern systems of schooling in our country because of our inclination towards blind imitation of western impersonal patterns and uncritical continuation of the "left-over" system of the colonial times. It is high time that we try to restore and re-define our goals of training as well as their proper ways and means, while accommodating them to our present needs of priestly and missionary formation

TOWARDS A FORMULATION OF THE CURRICULUM OF PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES

IN THE LIGHT OF SAPIENTIA CHRISTIANA, FIDES ET RATIO, AND GENERAL NORMS FOLLOWING THE APOSTOLIC VISITATION OF ECCLESIASTICAL FACULTIES, SEMINARIES AND HOUSES OF PRIESTLY FORMATION IN INDIA.

Victor Machado[*]

Introduction

The three documents from the Holy See referred to here were issued in a span of 23 years, all during the Pontificate of Pope John Paul II. *Sapientia Christiana* was given on the 15th, April, 1979 in the first year of his Pontificate within six months of his first encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*. The purpose of this document was to highlight the need and importance of transmission of theological and philosophical knowledge in our seminaries. Speaking about the Centres of higher learning in general, the document says,

> The cultural atmosphere in which a human being lives had great influence upon his or her way of thinking and thus, of acting. Therefore, a division between faith and culture is more than a small impediment to evangelisation, while a culture penetrated with the christian spirit is an instrument that favours the spreading of the Good News (1).

In this activity of the Church, "the catholic universities have had and still have special importance" (2). The church has a special predilection to Centres of higher learning as it is evident from the teachings of the Popes, "The church well knows the future of society and of her own self, which is closely bound up with the development of young people engaged in higher studies (3). The document says that such Centres have their own mission of evangelisation (4).

> In the first place, the church has entrusted to these Faculties the task of preparing with special care students for the priestly ministry, for

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teaching the sacred sciences, and for the more arduous tasks of the apostolate (5).

The document puts in evidence the importance the church lays on such ecclesiastical faculties when it says, "Ecclesiastical Faculties ought to be conscious of their importance in the Church and of their participation in the ministry of the Church" (6). It also continues in the same strain referring to the command of Christ to the disciples to go and preach the Good News to the whole world (cf.Mt.28:19-20). This also gives a special responsibility to the Faculties to adhere to what Christ the Supreme Teacher has said. "From this it follows that there must be in these Faculties that adherence by which they are joined to the full doctrine of Christ, whose authentic guardian and interpreter has always been through the ages, the magisterium of the Church (7).

The Task of the Faculties

In this way, the Faculties are called upon to bear witness before the whole community of the faithful to their wholehearted following of the command of Christ. "This witness must always be borne both by the Faculty as such and by each and every member of the Faculty" (8).

The Faculties which the document speaks about, have to be fully inserted into the changing situations of the society and must be able to respond to the new demands of the present day. This means that their individual laws and statutes should be subjected to revision (9). There is also another reason for such a revision and that is none other than the evolution that has taken place in pedagogical and didactic methods, which call for new ways of organising studies. Then there is the closer connection that is being felt more and more between various sciences and disciplines, as well as the desire for greater cooperation in the whole university environment (10).

The work, begun in 1967 of revising the study programme, had to be completed and perfected with a new law. Hence this particular document abrogating all the previous ones, which include some still valid elements from these documents, while laying down new norms whereby the renewal that has already successfully begun, can be developed and completed (11).

The document is aware of the Ecclesiastical Faculties which exist throughout the world erected and approved by the Holy See. But there needs to be a substantial unity between them and proper guidelines should be laid down for the granting of degrees having universal value. The purpose of all this is a legitimate progress in academic studies which can not be hindered nor restricted, but rather directed through right channels towards obtaining better results. In spite of the different Faculties, the unity among them, will also manifest the basic unity of the catholic church.

The document proposes General Norms in the I Part and gives Special Norms in the Second. Setting down the nature and purpose of such Faculties it deals with the running of such Institutes in its various aspects from the academic to the administrative. The General Norms as stated in that part are not a matter of our concern now, We shall concentrate on the Special Norms and that too only on the Faculty of Philosophy as contained in Section III of Part II, articles 79 to 83.

The Task of Philosophy

What is the task of philosophy? It has the aim of investigating philosophical problems according to scientific methodology, basing itself on a heritage of perennially valid philosophy (12). Hence philosophy has to be taught in such a way that the students in the basic cycle will come to a solid and coherent synthesis of doctrine, will learn to examine and judge the different systems of philosophy and will also gradually become accustomed to personal philosophical reflection.

Further still, the task of philosophy is to equip the students with tools to be ready to teach and fill other suitable intellectual posts. That apart, they are also to be prepared to promote Christian culture and lead to fruitful dialogue with the people of our time (13).

This document gives utmost importance to the teaching and directives of the II Vatican Council, when it says that "in teaching philosophy, the relevant norms should be observed which are contained in the Council's documents"(14), and in other recent statements of the Holy See concerning academic studies.

The Curriculum of Philosophical Studies

The document enumerates a detailed curriculum to be followed in a Faculty of Philosophy. It divides the whole course in three Cycles. The first cycle should consist of two years or four semesters during which an organic exposition of the various parts of philosophy is imparted which includes the world, man and God. It also should consist of history of philosophy, together with an introduction into the method of scientific research (15).

Part II, Section III even details the different subjects that are to be treated in the first cycle and they are: Systematic philosophy with its principal parts: i.e., philosophy of knowledge, natural philosophy, philosophy of man, philosophy of being (including natural theology) and moral philosophy; history of philosophy, especially of modern philosophy, with a careful study of the systems which are exercising a major influence; the auxiliary disciplines, namely, selected natural and human sciences. (16).

Specialization begins in the second cycle, which should last for two years or four semesters. Special disciplines and seminars are to be conducted so that the students may have a more profound knowledge of the question in consideration (17).

The doctoral dissertation is the purpose of the third cycle. Such a scientific work calls for Philosophical maturity, which in turn is promoted by such a work (18). All these three cycles have their respective degrees which will be conferred by the Faculty, and they are, the degrees of Baccalaureate, Licentiate, and Doctorate. The purpose of all these degrees is not just for the sake of personal gain of a student, but for the promotion of scientific progress of the subject in hand. It is not to be just an addition by way of a production but it should be a quality outcome of a serious study on a particular theme.

An evaluation by way of examination or equivalent tests for each discipline is also directed by the document; a comprehensive examination too is necessary as per the document. The purpose of such evaluation is to assure that the student has received the full and scientific formation demanded by the respective cycle (19).

FIDES ET RATIO

The Purpose

The issuance of the encyclical, *FIDES ET RATIO* on the 14th September, 1998, in the twentieth year of the Pontificate of Pope John Paul II has a clear statement on the need of philosophy in Formation Houses, stressing on the need of bringing faith and reason together and maintaining their inter-relatedness right through.

The purpose of this document is expressed by the Pope himself when he says that faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth, so that by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves. It is a forceful affirmation of the importance and indispensability of philosophy and of the pressing need to rediscover the intimate connection that exists between philosophy and christian theology (20).

He himself being a philosopher, the Pope views philosophy as a "way to come to know fundamental truths about human life", and as "an indispensable help for the deeper understanding of faith and for communicating the truth of the gospel to those who do not yet know it" (21).

The attainment of truth is a journey of discovery, which sets human beings going and provides their lives with meaning (22). Does the church have a role in this Journey? Yes; and it is nothing other than the prophetic mission of Christ, which the Church makes her own consisting in "diakonia of truth"(23), And the church fulfils this task in two ways: (1) by becoming "a partner in humanity's shared struggle to arrive at truth", and (2) at the same time by proclaiming "the certitudes arrived at, albeit with a sense that every truth attained is but a step towards the fullness of truth which will appear with the final Revelation of God" (24).

In the quest for truth one of the noblest resources that humans have at their disposal is philosophy (25). Though philosophy is defined as 'love of wisdom', it has a powerful influence on the formation and development of a great many cultures both in the East and the West. Each culture has brought about a particular system and it has contributed to the pursuit of

truth. One can discern "a core of philosophical insight, within the history of thought as a whole" which in some way is shared by all (26).

The Need for the Encyclical

The Pope feels the need to write this encyclical, because in the present times in particular philosophy seems to have lost its way and has tended to neglect the search for the ultimate truth which is its original vocation (27). Modern philosophy has tried to curtail the capacity of the human mind; it has rather pronounced a lack of confidence in truth and it assumes that all truths are equally valid and thus finds itself adrift in the ocean of opinions. Shunning philosophical pride and false modesty, what is needed is a certain discipline especially from the part of those, "whose vocation is to give a cultural expression to their thinking" (28) The need of the hour is that philosophy should discover its original vocation and reassume its great responsibility of forming thought and culture.

The Knowledge proper to Faith

The Pope recalls the teaching of various councils "that there exists a knowledge which is peculiar to faith, surpassing the knowledge proper to human reason", a knowledge which expresses a truth based upon the very fact of God, who reveals himself, a truth which is most certain, since God neither deceives nor can be deceived (29).

This truth coupled with faith is absolutely necessary to unravel the mystery of human life. This truth is neither the product of the human reason nor is it the result of an argument devised by the mind, It is something gratuitous, which itself stirs thought and seeks acceptance of an expression of love (30). The Pope here makes a reference to the Council's document on the Church in the Modern World, which says there exists a twofold order, distinct both with regard to their source and their object, the order of natural reason and the order of the supernatural within which faith operates. (31).

The Relation between knowledge by faith and by reason

Here the unity between knowledge of reason and faith is profound and indissoluble. "Faith sharpens the inner eye", whereas the light of reason leads us to discover the path we need to take. But following "that

path to its end, quickly and unhindered" is possible only if our spirits are "rightly tuned" within the horizon of faith (32). No reason for any competition between these two, for each contains the other, and each has its own scope for action (33).

Reason to be true to itself must respect three fundamental truths: (1) that human knowledge is an ever unfolding journey; (2) that this journey is not for the proud, who think that everything is the fruit of personal conquest; (3) that God rules the world with the provident love (34). Only within the overall context of the ultimate order of things do the results of reasoning acquire their true meaning and it is faith that makes this possible by liberating reason from false horizons and positions. (35)

The Human Quest for Truth

Man cannot be indifferent to truth, since there is a deep-seated longing for truth in the heart of every human being (36). Hence the need to search for it with all one's might, though success does not come everyone's way in the same measure. The reason for this is that there are certain factors which impede our search and they even distort our understanding. They are: a.) Natural limitation of reason, b.) Inconstancy of the heart, c.) Worldly concerns, and d.) Fear of the demands that truth makes, Hence it is necessary to overcome these in the search for truth, One should see that his efforts are not threatened by fear and anxiety (37).

Man and Truth

It is customary to define man in any culture or thought. How does the Pope define man, who is his favourite subject of study? He defines man as the one who seeks truth. Truth-seeking makes a man. This way of looking at man goes to the very root of his life and activity. Man is a seeker, a searcher by nature. The most important search is for truth, meaning of life and his own nature (38).

Such a search so deeply rooted in the human being cannot be in vain and useless. The capacity to search and to pose questions itself implies the rudiments of a response, which makes man take a first step, making way for further steps however difficult they may be. It is also a fact of experience that man is able to arrive at truth. These truths can either be those which are proper to daily life, or philosophical ones arrived at by

speculation, or religious truths, depending on different religious traditions or thoughts (39).

Truth and Trust

The manner in which we arrive at truth is important. This largely depends on traditions in which we are immersed and which provide us a range of truths to believe almost instinctively (40). "The capacity to entrust oneself and one's life to another person and the decision to do so are among the most significant and expressive of human acts" (41). What is sought is the truth of the person, what a person is and what the person reveals from deep within. Human perfection consists not simply in acquiring an abstract knowledge of the truth, but in a dynamic relationship of faithful trust in others.

Some things we know to be true because we have personally verified them, though they depend on others' testimony. But what is important is the personal trust in our search for truth. The purpose of this is to attain a perfect harmony between faith and reason. (42). This is another evidence of the journey of discovery and search. In this connection the Pope is not unaware of the negative positions which will emerge on the way of finding the truth. These positions which are detrimental to truth have to be carefully avoided and concentrate on the attainment of Truth, a pearl of great price (43).

Truth and Dialogue

Here it is necessary to realise the real purpose of dialogue. It is not to draw someone to our position, but it is to have respect for truth wherever it is found and it is found anywhere if sought with sincere and honest heart. Nobody can have a claim on truth because it comes as a gift, and hence there is no monopoly over truth. The encyclical, at this point tells us to be ready and to learn from others, even from unbelievers. Each one is to realise that he/she is called to witness to and proclaim truth in its most tangible way (44).

Truth and Freedom

What is it that liberates man? It is truth and hence it is a life-long task of every human being, to be after the attainment of truth in order to have

freedom. It is a matter of experience that it is truth alone that sets man free. As it is not possible to reach the fullness of truth by our limited experience, so too it is not possible to attain full freedom. Hence it is a journey towards freedom and along this Journey there are certain elements to be realised (45).

1, Truth is one, whereas untruth is manifold.

2. Truth demands acceptance, challenges the human mind, independently of race, culture, religion etc...

3. Despite the compelling nature of truth, man remains 'free' to choose untruth.

4. When we choose untruth, we become responsible for its consequences.

It is the task of philosophy to liberate man from error and set him on the right track of truth to be authentic persons. That's why it is said that Truth is a pearl of great price. The Pope in this encyclical makes amply clear his passion for truth leading to liberation. Because truth exists, man goes in search of it. This is a consoling thought for all those who are in the process of such a search (46).

Truth and Error

The search for truth inevitably brings up the question of untruth or error. The seeker after truth cannot simply put all thoughts together as opinions. An incomplete truth may be of some help, but an error is an obstacle which has to be abandoned. The church has always exposed error in her pursuit of truth. The Pope extols the reality of truth and side by side exposes those systems which make the search for truth difficult or even impossible, To be able to refute falsehood and correct error one must believe in objective truth and be guided by it (47).

In the pursuit of truth there are three temptations just like Jesus encountered in his mission-fulfilment.

1. Temptation to be self-sufficient, self-reliant, to have a save-yourself attitude, the secularist tendency; hence 'Not by bread alone' means, 'not by reason alone' 'not by human effort alone'.

2. A Fideistic temptation, in which there is a 'God-will-do-everything' attitude. There is no need of human effort or caution or prudence. To be presumptuous in our pursuit.

3. Conquer the whole world and 'lose one's soul' temptation. That is to say, not to refer the search for truth to the inner self and to one's dignity and value (48).

These and such temptations will take man away from the real and authentic search of anything beyond man. They will sidetrack the more important and necessary dimension of human life, denying it of its worth and meaning.

Inculturation and the Study of Philosophy

The Pope says that 'Revelation introduces into history 'an universal and ultimate truth' (49), which transcends cultures and places (50). What does this statement assume? It brings out the dimension of Revelation and consequently of Philosophy. Philosophy is to be considered as a special-activity of the human reason (51), and this activity is driven by the quest for the meaning of life (52) and it consists in asking and answering the fundamental questions about life and its meaning (53). This involves a rigorous mode of thought and it issues into a systematic body of knowledge (53). It has its own tools and methods, depending on sense perception and experience, guided by the light of intellect alone (54). This may be described as a practical wisdom and an education for life (55).

Such an activity is somehow transcultural and hence the need of inculturation in the study of philosophy. The emergence of different systems is attributed to different cultural contexts (56), depending on complementarity of cultures (57) and the historical and cultural conditioning of the truth formulations (58). Therefore the totality of truth can never be the right of any historical form of philosophy, so too a complete explanation of the human being and of the world defies any sort of systematisation in the strict sense.

The world is moving in the direction of a common heritage and a common platform from where to function, manifesting a common humanity. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights itself is an off-shoot of such a concept. Doesn't it mean that there exists a transcultural

core in every individual system making it historically conditioned? Philosophy as an activity should turn out to be transcultural and should acquire a wide perspective and must be applicable to all (59).

The encyclical says that philosophy prepares for a correct 'auditus fidei' through the structure of language in its dimension of communication (60) which is part and parcel of a true culture. In this process there are several problems which need to be addressed, because any study of theology has its own philosophical underpinnings bearing itself on the culture in which it takes its origin and shapes itself. Hence there is need of a critical evaluation of culture before ever thinking of inculturation (61).

It is to be noticed that the whole society is(1) replete with erroneous and inadequate notions of truth, which also manifest a widespread distrust of universal and absolute statements especially among those who think that truth is born out of consensus and not of an agreement between intellect and reality (62). And it is not altogether wrong to see that such distrust brings about the distrust of universality of revelation.

(2) Another problem that has to be faced is that of Historicism, as per which truth of philosophy is determined on the basis of the appropriateness to a certain period and a certain historical purpose, that is to say, what is true in one period may not be so in another (63). It is also true that the formulation of a truth is bound to be influenced in some way by time and culture, but the expression has to be something beyond space and time (64).

(3)Yet another problem is that of the relationship between meaning and truth; the meaning referred to here is not a narration of simple historical events, or of a statement of neutral facts, it is rather the meaning, those events have "in and for the history of salvation" (65). Here philosophy has its task cut out that is to examine from its point of view the relationship between fact and meaning, "a relationship which constitutes the specific sense of history" (66). Thus the task of philosophy is to get itself involved in the actual process of appropriation of the faith itself. This is because both Tradition and the Magisterium and Theologians often make use of a particular philosophical tradition, and a knowledge of such traditions by way of culture become indispensable for proper and correct interpretation (67).

Reference to the East

Here the Pope's "thoughts turn to the land of the East, so rich in religious and philosophical traditions of great antiquity. Among these lands, India has a special place" (68). Why does he single out India? He feels that the rich heritage of this great nation will enable to draw elements compatible with faith, so that christian thought may be enriched. I think this is really a positive thought of the Holy Father, recognising at the same time the riches of every culture where the Church finds herself (69).

Criteria

Such an interpretation is to be guided by certain principles, which the Pope calls as criteria of discernment, which find inspiration from the Council's Declaration, *Nostra Aetate*. And they are: (70)

(1) Universality of the human spirit, whose basic needs are the same all over and in the most disparate of cultures.

(2) In engaging great cultures for the first time, the church cannot abandon what she has gained from her inculturation in the world of Greco Roman thought. This is to be considered as valid in very age.

(3) Care is to be taken lest, contrary to the very nature of the human spirit, the legitimate defense of the uniqueness and originality of Indian thought be confused with a particular cultural tradition and remain closed in its difference and affirm itself by opposing other traditions.

These criteria tell us that there should be a continuous process of inculturation. Somehow or other we become deeply rooted in a certain tradition and just to abandon it without reason or purpose is going to be arbitrary. No inculturation begins in a vacuum, and hence all of us become part of a tradition (71).

It is also necessary to realise that cultures are not away from history. Both of them interact with each other and they have to. Or else each of them will run on totally different lines and will be devoid of any meaning

and value for human life, If and when they are together there takes place communication of values and assimilation of new experiences (72).

The above mentioned criteria are meant to impress upon us not to lose sight of the importance of a properly philosophical and metaphysical inquiry into the process of inculturation. A discernment basically means and demands a philosophical foundation and inquiry or else it is going to be a futile exercise, leading us nowhere. It is only such a philosophical inquiry which leads us to the objective truth, and in the final analysis all inculturation should take off from the objective truth and should lead to it (73). It may be necessary to point out here that even theology without a metaphysical horizon and basis could not move beyond the analysis of religious experience, which may turn out to be subjective (74).

The Church and Philosophy

From the very beginning itself the church was confronted with the philosophical systems of the time, for instance, Paul had warned the Colossians to be on their guard against being taken", captive through philosophy and empty deceit" that is to say, a kind of "esoteric specualtion", which is widespread at every moment of history(75). But in history the church has come out of that tangle and has stood beyond any subjective approach to truth.

It is to the credit of the church that it has made philosophy accessible to the common man. It has contributed to the affirmation of the right of everyone to have access to the truth(76). e.g. many of the Church Fathers made use of philosophy in dealing with religious truths(77).

It is true that philosophy is autonomous on the basis of the fact "that reason is by its nature oriented to truths and equipped with the means necessary to arrive at truth and that a philosophy which did not proceed in the light of reason according to its own principles and methods would serve little purpose" (78). But the task of the church's magisterium is not to intervene,, but humbly and tenaciously to exercise a critical discernment of opinions and philosophies which contradict christian doctrine and confuse the 'pure and simple faith of the People of God' (79). Hence the task of the church is to prompt, promote and encourage philosophical inquiry(80).

An Independent Philosophy?

With all the above, the most important question looms large - does the Pope advocate an independent philosophy or what type of philosophy does he advocate? A connected question could be - should there be an independent philosophy? What is wrong in falling in line with the thinking of any other culture so long as it is convenient? The encyclical has already touched upon the existence of an universal spirit that is prevalent, call it a common humanity or whatever. Aren't there certain patterns of the consciousness which mark us all as one? Isn't there a desire to do the right things and the right way to live? Aren't love, affection, truth, trustworthiness so very necessary that without them one is unable to live? Doesn't everyone experience a deep-seated longing for something beyond? Don't the words of Augustine become the driving force in our life?

It is the fact of common understanding that all the above are universal to all human beings cultures and thought-patterns. That's why we can say that these structures and questions have in themselves in germ and in a hidden way the principles and concepts which we may term transcultural and which the church has been advocating all through. Hence the relationship of philosophy and the church is very close and needs to be promoted.

Hence the Pope expresses his displeasure at the position taken by some theologians who have demonstrated a lack of interest in the study of philosophy. Both philosophy and theology are closely related to each other. If any thinks otherwise he is very much mistaken. Without recourse to philosophy an authentic theologizing is impossible. (82). The need of the hour then, according to the Pope, is to create a necessary infrastructure for an intelligent philosophical and theological formation of those called to ministry (83).

It is not the question of an independent philosophy totally cut away from reality or culture, or theology, rather it means that the philosophy the church chooses should be one which is totally free of any clutches, but one which approaches reality on its own as a science to arrive at certain of its own conclusions. Though the Pope does seem to support a Thomistic approach than any other, we need to look beyond and take into confidence

the many different ways of understanding reality making it more personalistic than anything else.

Various Stances-of Philosophy

The Pope puts forward three stances which emerge out of the different thought-patterns which have ruled, the minds of men right through the centuries.

(1) Considering philosophy as totally independent of the Gospel, a philosophy so autonomous an enterprise, that obeys its own rules and employs the powers of reason alone. The error consists in considering philosophy to be totally self-sufficient. (84).

(2) Christian Philosophy as it has been often pictured. Though this is valid, it should not seem that the church has an official philosophy of her own. Rather it refers to a Christian way of philosophizing accompanied by faith. (85).

(3) How does theology need philosophy? The need is to be a partner in dialogue in order to confirm the intelligibility and universal truth of its claims. Hence the traditional principle which said that philosophy is the "handmaid of theology" is to be understood in more personalistic terms. Philosophy is not subservient to theology, but both of them walk together the journey of discovering the truth. Both of them need each other to achieve the joint purpose, or else they will be handicapped. (86)

Need to discover the Original Vocation of Philosophy

The Pope decries the plight and the situation man is in today, and that according to the encyclical is a "crisis of meaning"(87), due to fragmentation of knowledge. Man at times does not even ask the meaning of life and consequently there is a crisis of values, both moral and religious. The need of the hour is that philosophy rediscovers its original vocation, that is, "recover its sapiential dimension as a search for the ultimate and overarching meaning of life"(88).

This 'dimension is all the more necessary because the immense expansion of humanity's technical capability demands a renewed and sharpened sense of ultimate values. Technology should be ordered to

something greater than a merely utilitarian end, or else it would soon prove inhuman and even become potential destroyer of the human race (89).

The Pope is not unaware of the obstacles or hindrances for such a *sapiential dimension* to be adopted. Hence the need for certain requirements, such as (i) insistence on total and definitive truth, (ii) verification of the human capacity to know the truth, (iii) need for a philosophy of genuinely metaphysical range, transcending the empirical data to attain something absolute (90).

What the Pope wants by proposing these requirements is that "reality and truth do transcend the factual and the empirical and to vindicate the human being's capacity to know the transcendent and metaphysical dimension". The Pope continues and says, whenever men and women discover a call to the absolute and transcendent a whole range of metaphysical range opens up: in truth, in beauty, in moral values, in other persons, in being itself and in God"(91).

Challenge to the Philosopher

The Pope proposes a challenge to every philosopher to move from *phenomenon to foundation*, a step that is so very necessary as it is urgent. Though experience reveals the human being's interiority and spirituality, speculation it is, which penetrates the spiritual core and ground from which it rises (92). There is no doubt that the Pope is clear about the tasks demanded of a true philosophy that is the possibility of coming to an unified and organic vision of knowledge. This is the task which the christian philosopher should take up. "The segmentation of knowledge, with its splintered approach to truth and consequent fragmentation of meaning, keeps people today from coming to an interior unity" (93).

It is also necessary to be aware of the dangers, which are hidden in some currents of thought, which are especially prevalent today. The Pope lists some of them, as (a) eclecticism, (b) historicism, (c) scientism, (d) pragmatism, (e) nihilism (94).

The Pope, the Philosopher

In the concluding part of the encyclical the philosopher-pope reiterates the importance of philosophy with a strong link to theology,

because it is in close relationship of these two there is to be found a wealth of common reflection (95). Insistence on the importance and true range of philosophical thought, the church promotes both the defence of human dignity and the proclamation of the Gospel message. What is of utmost importance today is "to lead people to discover their capacity to know the truth"(96).

The Pope continues saying "Philosophy moreover is the mirror which reflects the culture of a people" and it is called upon to take part in the evangelisation of culture (97). In the appeal for new evangelisation, the Pope says, the philosopher has a special task "to explore more comprehensively the dimensions of true, the good and the beautiful to which the word of God gives access... The attention to philosophy too should be seen as a fundamental and original contribution in service of the new evangelisation" (98).

The need is urgent, says the Pope, to make use of philosophy to have dialogue with those who don't share our faith. This demands an attentive and competent commitment, ability to discern the expectations and openness to the key issues, which are the concerns of every human being at this historical moment. It is the responsibility of the Christian philosophers to develop a reflection, enabling everyone to grasp the full truth, which divine Revelation declares. Hence the most pressing issues like ecology, peace and co-existence of different races and cultures may possibly find a solution, if there is a clear and honest collaboration between christians and other religions, leading to the renewal of humanity. (99).

Philosophy and Priestly Formation

Referring to the formation of candidates to the priesthood, the encyclical says that they need a solid philosophical formation (100). Hence the Pope says, "I encourage them to pay special attention to the philosophical preparation of those who will proclaim the Gospel to the men women of today and, even more, of those who will devote themselves to theological research and teaching. It is their duty "to contribute to a genuine and profound communication of the truths of the faith" (101).

The Holy Father reminds of the "grave responsibility to provide for the appropriate training of those charged with teaching philosophy both in seminaries and ecclesiastical faculties. Teaching in this field necessarily entails a suitable scholarly preparation, a systematic presentation of the great heritage of the christian tradition and due discernment in the light of the current needs of the church and the world" (102).

The special appeal the Pope makes to philosophers and to all teachers of philosophy needs to be heeded with attention and readiness. It consists in having "the courage to recover, in the flow of an enduringly valid philosophical tradition, the range of authentic wisdom and truth which is proper philosophical inquiry"(103). This means to be open to the impelling questions which arise from the word of God and they should be strong enough to shape their thought and discussion in response to that challenge. They have to strive for truth always, alert to the good which truth contains. Then only they will be able to formulate the genuine ethics which humanity needs so urgently at this particular time of history (104).

The Holy Father has special word of encouragement to the philosophers, when he says, "The Church follows the work of philosophers with interest and appreciation and they should rest assured of her respect for the rightful autonomy of their discipline"(105).

It is not only the philosopher but everyone is called upon to arrive after truth, that's what the encyclical says, "I ask everyone to look more deeply at man, whom Christ has saved in the mystery of his love and at the human being's unceasing search for truth and meaning"(106). He also has a word of warning and caution not to be allured by different philosophical systems, because "the grandeur of the human being consists in finding fulfillment only in choosing to enter the truth, to make a home under the shade of Wisdom and dwell there"(107). If the purpose of philosophy is to liberate man, the Pope says, "only within the horizon of truth will people understand their freedom in its fullness and their call to know and love God as the supreme realisation of their true self" (108).

Report of the Visitation:

The third document that we are called upon to take up is the following: GENERAL NORMS Following the APOSTOLIC

VISITATION of ECCLESIASTICAL FACULTIES, SEMINARIES and HOUSES OF PRIESTLY FORMATION in INDIA. (G.N.)

This Visitation which took place between 1997 and 1999, was on the initiative of the Holy See. It was a joint effort of the Four Congregations concerned:

Catholic Education,

Evangelisation of Peoples,

Oriental Churches, and

Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

Forty Four Visitators visited 96 Institutes. All aspects of formation of candidates to the priesthood were taken into consideration following the criteria outlined in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, i.e. the human, spiritual, academic, and pastoral/missionary dimensions. (109). While the Report appreciates the great commitment of the Church in India to priestly formation, and the depth and breadth of resources involved in this ministry represents the wealth for the Church, it also has certain recommendations for the improvement of the formative work in these Institutes (110).

The first remark the G.N. makes is that the Charter of Priestly Formation in India has not been fully implemented in most of the seminaries in India. Hence the need to pay attention to this, besides paying great emphasis on Ecclesia in Asia and the Declaration, *Dominus Jesus*(111).

With regard to the study of philosophy the G.N. has this to say, "Keeping in mind *Fides Et Ratio*, the curriculum in all philosophates should be reviewed for content and methodology" (112). One observation that has been made in the G.N. is the fact of many variations in philosophy training in India, and there is a need for more consistency (113). It enumerates the variations and says that a programme should be selected that conforms to the Charter of Priestly Formation in India, n-3-2.3f.

The G.N. says that sufficient time be given to the proper study of philosophy. While the seminarians should be exposed to a variety of

schools of philosophy, Thomism, and Indian Philosophy, in connection with and in view of future study of Theology and the fundamental questions of human existence are to be stressed. (114). The report refers to what the encyclical, *Fides Et Ratio* says (115).

Basing itself on Canon No.250 of CIC and Canon No. 348 of CCE0, the report says that where the current programme is less than two years, it should be changed. The Canons say the studies in philosophy and theology should last six full years, in such a way that the time given to philosophical studies amounts to two full years and that allotted to theological studies to four full years.

The G.N. also stresses the need for the academic qualifications of the Faculty members, and the preparation of new Faculty members to take on the load of work; more than that it is to ensure the formation of the candidates. There needs to be a minimum of permanent formators so that they may be able to pay personal attention to the formees.

Though it does not propose a curriculum of philosophical studies, it bases itself on the previous Documents of the Church, both universal and local. What the report intends doing is to emphasize the need to stick to the norms given earlier and not to have too many innovations. It wishes to have a continuity of the traditional way of dealing with the subjects while at the same time opening the programme to new realities around.

CURRICULUM

Having gone through what the Documents have said, it is necessary to see what curriculum could be derived from them. Let it be clear to us that the purpose of *Fides Et Ratio* and the G.N. was not to propose a curriculum, but to set those responsible thinking and planning about it, taking into account all that is necessary for a holistic approach to the study of philosophy. One thing stands out is the fact that the Pope with his own philosophical background desires a study of man in all his dimensions, his nature, dignity, rights and duties. A study of man is not to be done in a vacuum; that is to say, he is closely related to the world he lives in and the Absolute from where he comes and to whom he goes.

So it is an integrated picture of reality that needs to be treated. Then only philosophy becomes a science of the whole reality. But what should it

have in its programme? An adherence to tradition, but to see tradition as living in the present circumstances, thus considering nothing as alien in an integrated study of reality.

Philosophy should go beyond boundaries. Hence the perennial quality of philosophy has to be kept up and preserved. Perennial philosophy need not mean sticking to the past as a museum piece; it means bringing philosophy out in the open. It also means making philosophy more and more relevant or having a praxis-oriented approach.

Talking about praxis-oriented philosophy means making that otherwise abstract science look not so abstract after all and in the bargain applying it to every day life of an individual. Thus philosophy turns out to be a science of human life and its meaningfulness. It includes both speculation, critical analysis and prescription for life. It also means action, both physical, mental and spiritual. It is a two-way traffic, in that, praxis is always guided by philosophy and praxis-experience does and must lead to philosophy in its turn. It is a contextualised philosophy that will take into serious account the prevalent social, economic and cultural problems and questions in its reflection and search (116).

Why do we need a praxis-oriented philosophy? (117)

1) Every human being is guided by some philosophy about which one may be aware or not. Such a

philosophy leads to action, essential for life. There is no growth without action.

2) If philosophy is known to be love of wisdom, which liberates man, then such a liberation

should have recourse to praxis leading to self-fulfillment. A true liberation is the manifestation of action.

3) Philosophical ideologies have taken over from religious ideologies, since the modern man has a distance for everything that is religious.This means

4) It is philosophy which takes upon itself the task of highlighting simple and basic truths about

man, the purpose of his life and his needs and rights.

5) Even in the history of philosophy various types of philosophies have been praxis-oriented for more reasons than one.

6) With the sort of a reaction to the abstract type of philosophy all over, praxis-oriented philosophy does take the centre stage.

Having said that, we need to have certain way of going about in this new venture. Hence here are some suggestions: (118).

1) The core of philosophical education really consists in developing an ability to raise weighty critical questions about all significant realities concerning concrete human existence.

2) One of the best ways of developing this capacity for questioning would be a critical study of history, literature and works of art by taking into his stride everything that concerns human life.

3) The purpose of such a study is not only to make us observant and discerning, but to make us have a live contact with people and participate in the people's struggles of liberation and collaborate in their efforts to build up a society worthy of human dignity and God's reign.

4) There is also the need to have a critical survey of the history of Thought in India, in Asia and in the rest

of the world, tracing their development against the background of history of peoples.

5) There is no question of absolutizing theology or philosophy. Hence it is necessary to understand that God is greater than our heart and our histories, theologies mid philosophies. This means, what really matters is neither philosophy nor theology, but the people, their liberation and life and their God.

6) The question should not be what to choose, theology or philosophy, but to see both of them as essentially synthetic, going together and complementing each other, pointing to the ultimate unity of destiny of

all things and peoples. Thus the ultimate keeps on coming into our life as we live it in the present.

CONCLUSION

Our purpose has been to see philosophy in the context of the Houses of Formation. What should it be? (119). It should consist in the following:

a/. to train the students in the method of clear and logical thinking

b/. to familiarize them with various problems that affect life today.

c/. to enlighten them on the way the great minds have tried to offer solutions to such problems in their own contexts.

d/. to train these young men to tackle these problems on their own in the present-day context and come out with their own solutions, i.e, to teach to philosophize in today's context.

To achieve this there needs to be a change in our entire perspective and emphasis, that is, exercising the praxis aspect together with the speculative and see that they run together, This also will bring out the personalistic dimension of philosophy without too much stress on metaphysics for its own sake. This is a task before every right thinking human person on whom rests the future of philosophy.

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Survey

JAINA DHARMA: A LITTLE KNOWN FAITH FOR DEEPER UNDERSTANDING AND ENRICHING LIFE

Dr. Vincent Sekhar[♦]

The primary aim in jotting down a few introductory notes on Jaina Dharma is one of discovering *what is true and holy (Vatican II, Nostra Aetate 2)* in it for mutual enrichment. Reading and understanding life from a perspective other than our own does create a helpful atmosphere for Interreligious and cultural dialogue. The goal of life that we all cherish seems similar but the path that we undertake to achieve that goal varies. The religious consciousness of the Jains varies considerably from all other faiths, especially from the Semitic religions. The root of non-violence and renunciation in India could be traced to the Jaina and other sramana religious traditions of India. Rooted in Indian cultural ethos also means *sharing* their elements enshrined in the various ritualistic and faith traditions of India. Jaina way of life offers an opening for such an understanding and osmosis. By opening ourselves to such an osmosis 'we are opening ourselves to God' *(John Paul II in his address to the Pontifical Secretariat for Non-Christians, 28 April 1987, n. 38)* and to 'God's ongoing dialogue with humanity' *(GC 34, Our Mission and Interreligious Dialogue, n. 133).* India has never been the same as it is claimed now. It was Buddhist and Jain at one time before it is called *Hindu* India. The following pages might evoke ideas similar to and/or different from one's own approaches and understanding of reality and life. But they are for our mutual enrichment.

Dharma, a word synonymous with *Religion*, in Jainism has two broad meanings: one is generic in usage and the other, technical and specific to the use of the term. Dharma in technical sense is the basis for dynamism in life, helps movement or motion and, as such, it is opposed to adharma, stillness or rest. They are the media or the occasioning cause for motion and or rest respectively, just as water is helpful for a fish to move about. No other system of thought in India has convinced these two terms in such a fashion as in Jaina system. It is possible that these two terms that

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signify *life* (movement) and *death* (stillness) have later acquired *moral* connections.

The generic term Dharma has two levels of meaning: one is metaphysical and the other, ethical and moral. Our behaviour cannot be isolated from our vision about reality and truth (meta-physical beliefs). Acarya Samantabhadra says that without knowing the *real* nature of things (which is permanency in transitoriness), all moral distinction between the antithesis of bondage and liberation, virtue and vice, heaven and hell, pleasure and pain will be blurred. The ultimate aim of logic and reasoning is the realization of this relation between metaphysics and ethics.

The Jaina *vision* and *way of life* brings about this relation between the two. It is the *vision* that gives purpose to one's life. Morality is that which unites all individuals as society. Tattvarthasutra (I.1), a major work accepted by all the sects in Jaina community, points out that Dharma constitutes *vision, knowledge, and conduct of life.* They are the *inseparable path* to liberation, just as adding goodness to faith, and knowledge to goodness in order to share in divine power and nature *(2 Peter 1:5).* This comprehensive and accommodative vision and the way has been lived and taught by the Jaina masters and seers (*Tirthankaras* and others), handed down by them to the posterity through scriptures and their traditions, and accepted by the Jaina community as normative to their life.

In order to understand the goal of life (liberation or *Moksa*, understood as perfect knowledge, faith, strength, and bliss) one has to be conversant with the *essence* of reality. The process of achievement of this goal, understood as the *Journey of the Soul towards its End*, is usually outlined in the seven fundamental principles (*sapta tattva*). It could be described in a simple way. A conscious living being (*Jiva*) gets entangled and bound by the non-conscious matter (an *Ajiva*) through passionate activities of attachment and aversion. Subsequently, there is the inflow (*asrava*) or accumulation of a subtle thing called *karma* and the consequent bondage (bandha) by such karma. From now on, the process of liberation takes place. The living being, once bound, has to check the inflow (*samvara*) of karma through meritorious deeds like taking the vows and adhering to certain other virtuous actions. This leads the living being finally to the shedding (*nirjara*) of the entire karma by means of penance, etc. This complete annihilation of karma is described in several ways as *Moksa* or *Mukti* or liberation.

The conscious being Jiva or the Self is essentially a *spiritual* entity endowed with apprehension and knowledge. It is similar to the *temple of God and of the Spirit (2Cor. 6:16).* But unfortunately all are born in and under sin (original sin or the fruit of karma in the previous birth), and sin brought death along with it *(Rom. 5:12).* Sin and the consequent death of the soul are the results of our actions. Hence bound by karma (an equivalent to sin and death), the soul (*antaratma*) remains co-extensive with the body (*bahiratma*) and becomes the agent of action and the enjoyer of the fruit of its own actions. Jiva thus passes through births and deaths before it could achieve its final liberation, as though the dead will be raised to eternal life some day *(1 Cor. 15:20-22).* This happens not because of any external agency but by the individual's personal effort.

The traditional Jaina view does not accept *grace of God* or help from any external agency (as Christians believe: *the Lord will save his people - Psalms 34:22; saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus - Acts 15:11*) for achieving the final end. If at all there is, it is for the Jains only from a conventional or practical point-of-view and *not really.* Their *Tirthankaras* are perfected beings and spiritual ideals, and as such they are only *pathfinders.* The Jaina invocation (the *Navkar* mantra) includes all such *pathfinders*, both transcendent and immanent deities, such as the masters and heads of the congregations (*acharyas*), the spiritual teachers (*upadhyayas*), and the spiritual practitioners in the universe (*sadhus*). Any one could achieve this goal by one's efforts.

There is a clear distinction between the empirical and the transcendental self. From the empirical point of view, the self (Jiva, which is purely spiritual) is associated with non-self (Ajiva or material), becomes the agent of actions, experiencing pain and pleasure. From the transcendental point of view the self is nothing to do with matter. It is perfected with infinite knowledge, vision, strength and bliss, known as the four-fold perfection (*anantacatustaya*). The invaluable nature of Jiva (or life) is such that once it is lost there is nothing that one can give to regain it *(Mark 8:36-37).* What distinguishes the self (Jiva) from the non-self (Ajiva) is consciousness. Jiva is a representative term that embraces all types of living organisms in the universe, including elemental bodies, with one to six senses. That is the reason why the Jaina attitude towards and the practice of non-violence are not confined merely to the world of the *humans* but includes all forms of life.

Jaina philosophy expounds the reality and nature of sin, a rebellion against oneself, one's true nature (in Christianity, it is a *rebellion against God - Deut 9:7*). Jiva (life), due to contact with Ajiva (non-life) is active. The very union of the two seems to take away one from the *Path*. Due to the various activities (*yoga*) of the agent (living organism) the invisible and subtle karmic particles flow into the soul, blurring it or causing damage to its four-fold pure and perfect nature, just as the mirror is smeared by dust. This blurred state is called *bandha* and it is a beginningless relation between the soul and non-soul (including matter). The force that binds the soul with karma is the four basic passions (*kasaya*) namely, anger (*krodha*), pride (*mana*), deceit (*maya*) and greed (*lobha*). Bondage due to passions leads one to births and rebirths. From the Jaina ethical point of view, it is wrong-belief (*mithyadarsana*), vow-lessness (*avirati*), negligence (*pramada*), passion (*kasaya*) and activities (mental, vocal and physical activities - *yoga*) that cause the bondage. It is due to this sin of *bondage* the intangible pure soul gets obliterated and becomes tangible as humans, plants, animals, and the like.

The fundamental cause for misery and happiness is *karma* and *karma* can be meritorious or harmful. The former leads to happiness and the latter to misery. But an individual prefers good (*subha*) to bad (*a-subha*) actions from a *practical* (*vyavaharika*) point of view because good actions or being virtuous lead one to happiness and good reward. All evil doers will face punishment *(God's judgement of reward or punishment - Romans 2:6-8; Psalms 28:4)*. But the Jains believe, according to the real (*niscaya*) point-of-view, that all activities whether good or bad lead the person to bondage. Hence there is the need for *detachment* and to transcend both good as well as bad deeds. It is *karma* that determines the quality and the type of life in the series of births: knowledge, perception, feeling, family, body, etc.

But this does not deprive a person from *being free*. Law of Freedom is the *Law of the Spirit*. No one can take away this freedom from the human heart because it is this that sets a person free from sin and death *(Romans 8:2)*. It is by one's free will and effort (*new karma*) that one could attain the goal of life. The Jaina masters have shown the path of *new karma* that puts a total stop to the damage done to the self by past acts. Liberation is the *state of being free* from all karma, but through a series of new efforts and discipline. Thus the power and the intensity of karma can

be completely annihilated by oneself through a slow climbing of the ladder of several spiritual stages, known as the *pratimas and gunasthanas*. Jaina religion is called sometimes the *Religion of Self-help.*

The principles that are discussed above are basic to Jaina Dharma. One needs to be conversant with this basic conception because everything for the Jains *(attitude and response to life and environment)* is founded on this. We could find similarities in concepts and in their explanations in other religious and philosophical traditions too. Discussing any theme in Indian systems might sound *philosophic* but these basic principles have larger implications on life, the truth about pain, sorrow and suffering, sinfulness and injury to the self and others, knowledge and renunciation, etc.

The following are some of its implications for life:

(1) Jiva, understood from its *real point of view* as pure and perfect, is the philosophical foundation and basis for equality and respect for *all* living beings. This truth is enshrined in the dictum, 'as the nature of this (i.e. man) is to be born and to grow old, so is the nature of that (i.e. plants) to be born and to grow old' *(Acaranga Sutra, I.1.5.6).* Non-violence and Vegetarianism have their roots in such as these sayings. The wickedness of the humans and of the earth in the Bible is traced to the spread of violence everywhere and all were evil in God's sight *(Genesis 6:11; Ezekiel 8:17),* and all human transactions led to violence and sin *(Ezekiel 28:16).* This is true until now. War and violence will remain until when humanity realizes this simple but basic truth about the *sacredness* of all living beings.

(2) Every organic life is concerned about its liberation. Hence the *cause* of bondage and the *means* of liberation are *common* for all living beings. The world has to apprehend that sinful acts towards one another set a block to the achievement of such liberation. 'For the sake of the splendour, honour, glory of this life, for the sake of birth, death and final liberation for the removal of pain, man acts sinfully towards earth, or causes others to act so, or allows others to act so. This deprives him of happiness and perfect wisdom' *(Acaranga Sutra, I.1.2.3)* and 'man that does not comprehend and renounce the cause of sin...is born again and again in manifold births, experiences all painful feelings' *(Ibid. I.1.6, 7).*

(3) The Jaina scriptures are particular in expounding the truth about suffering caused by selfishness and indiscriminate acts, the real causes of

sin: 'The (living) world is afflicted, miserable, difficult to instruct and without discrimination. In this world full of pain, suffering caused by their different acts, see the benighted ones cause great pain' *(Acaranga Sutra. 1.1.2.1).* The Jaina masters point out another truth about life: 'All beings are fond of life, (they) like pleasure, dislike pain, shuns destruction, like life, long to live. To all life is dear' *(Ibid. 1.2.3.4).* And hence if *himsa* is injurious and painful to one, the same will be painful to another because all beings hate pain. 'Know and realize that they all desire happiness. By hurting these beings, you harm your own soul...*(Sutrakrtanga I.7.1-2).* Therefore one should not kill them *(Ibid. 1.11.9).* And this is the quintessence of *wisdom (Ibid. 1.11.10),* the *maxim* of general application *(Ibid. II.2.80).* From a Christian perspective it might sound like this: God commanded the earth to produce all forms of life and it was done. And *God was pleased* with what he saw *(Genesis 1:24-25).* This is the basis for any *environmental theology.* Non-violence or non-injury to life is based on the *principle of mutuality or reciprocity*: 'As it would be unto thee, so it is with him whom thou intendest to kill... In the same way (it is with him) whom thou intendest to punish and to drive away' *(Acaranga Sutra 1.1.5.4-6).* We all owe to the same source and to the same destiny.

(4) Though life is dear to all living beings there cannot be *undue* attachment to it. Attachment to life sets a block to the goal to be achieved. Attachment to oneself provokes disregard and injury to others. The spirit of detachment or renunciation is the gateway to liberation: 'Life is dear to many who own fields and houses. Having acquired dyed and coloured (clothes), jewels, earnings, gold, women, they become attached to these things. And a fool who longs for life and is worldly minded, laments that (for these worldly goals) penance, self restraint and control do not avail will ignorantly come to grief' *(Acaranga Sutra. 1.2.3.3-5).* Injury is caused by attachment and greed. Hence non-attachment or non-grabbing (*aparigraha*) becomes a key (virtue) to liberation. Jaina spirituality and ethics points out repeatedly that any amount of gold will not satisfy a person who is greedy of riches and wealth. Violence and other sinful acts are born out of greed and it could destroy persons, their belongings, their identity and cultures. As property is an extension of a person, usurping it unjustly from the other would amount not only to hampering his/her growth but also denying oneself the means of liberation.

(5) Comprehension of the truth about life, namely pain and sorrow, naturally leads one to renunciation: 'the pain of mundane existence is observed so keenly and it is considered to be the true knowledge' *(Acaranga Sutra, I.2.6.2).* The course of the world (regarding evil) is observed carefully and a truth is born out of experience, namely, 'misery brings forth evil consequences' *(Ibid. I.3.2.1)* and one has to cease from violent acts. But it is impossible to shun birth and the subsequent pain and misery. And hence the sramana religions (Jain, Buddhist) offer *religious life or a life of self-denial and renunciation* as the best alternative: 'Perceiving the truth, they chose religious life with a desire of a pious end' *(Ibid. I.5.5.1).* 'Knowing pain and pleasure in all their variety and seeing his life not yet decline, a wise man should know *'that'* to be the proper moment (for entering a religious life)' *(Ibid. I.2.1.5).* Every religious history has gone through a transformation or passage of time (like the time of *St. Francis of Assisi* in Christian life history) considering poverty and simplicity of life as a real alternative to power, pomp and glory. It is a challenge even today.

(6) The true path is the path of *knowledge.* It is being *mindful* of the processes of mental, vocal and bodily actions (namely karma), their root causes and their effects. Whether one is a religious or not, one should follow this path of knowledge. The truth about knowledge *(Sutrakrtanga, II.3.37)* is that which finally leads one to the highest good, namely, liberation. This is similar to the *wisdom personified as God* in Christian tradition *(Proverbs 1:20),* characterized by sound judgment and intelligence, and apparent in the creative works of God *(Proverbs 3:19).* The *wise* are in the hands of God (*Eccl. 9:1*) and they have respect for wisdom and learning. And it is the *knowledge about the truth* that will set people free. Mahayana Buddhist tradition attaches much importance to *prajna* or *Buddha's wisdom* and equates it to Nirvana.

(7) Since both good as well as bad actions are the cause for bondage, freedom from karma is possible by ceasing from activity (at the least, harmful to one's own and to others) and ceasing from passions. The discovering one is awakened and ceases to act...seeing that acts will bear fruit, the knower of the sacred lore parts from (karma) *(Acaranga Sutra. I.4.4.3).* Those who engage in works and are held in worldly bondage do not know the law, which leads to liberation *(Sutrakrtanga. I.10.16).* The sinners cannot annihilate their works by new works; the pious annihilate

the works by abstention from works *(Ibid. I.12.15)*. But complete renunciation of action is impractical, nay, impossible. *Bhagavad Gita* says that at no time a person is inactive. Hence it would suggest a *disciplined* action for the *wise (4.18-20)*, unattached to its fruits *(2:47-48)*. One is not to get attached even to *worklessness*. Thus proposing a new trend of thought Gita worked through greater reconciliation between the *sramana* and the *brahmana* traditions.

(8) Despite this trend, the Jaina renouncer tradition insists on the complete abandonment of act as one of the ways to get rid of *karma*, the others being *carefulness* and resolving to tread the path of virtues *without passionate attachment*. Complete abandonment of action is considered even today an extreme form of Jaina asceticism, known as *holy death or Sallekhana*. The fourteenth and the last stage in the spiritual ladder (*gunasthanas*) is the status of a *perfected being abandoning action (a-yoga kevalin)*. Some of the rules for the Jaina monks and nuns pertaining to food, movement, etc. reflect an attitude of carefulness and detachment *(Acaranga Sutra I.7; II.1-7)*. But there are other instances where *pious acts* are exalted as means of attaining liberation: 'Turning from worldly life they reach the goal by pious acts; by their pious acts they are directed towards (liberation) and they show the way to others' *(Sutrakrtanga. I.15.10)*. But Jaina scriptures repeatedly point out that complete freedom is beyond good and bad acts.

(9) As indicated earlier, Jainism is said to be the *Religion of Self-help* or *Self-will:* 'Man, thou are thy own friend, why wishest though for a friend beyond thyself' *(Acaranga, I.8.3.4)*. Each one has to exert oneself in the rule of truth in order to overcome the evil one: 'Misery is produced by one's own works, not by those of somebody else (viz. fate, creator etc.)' *(Sutrakrtanga, I.12.11)*. 'Mother, father, daughter-in-law, brother, wife and sons will not be able to help me, when I suffer from my own deeds' *(Ibid. I.9.5; Uttaradhyayana Sutra, 6.31)* because 'the doer of the acts must suffer for them' *(Sutrakrtanga, 1.9.31)*. Hence it becomes a challenge for the aspirant to overcome the power of karma by his or her own insight and pure conduct. 'No one can escape the effects of their own actions' *(Uttaradhyayana Sutra, 4.3.)* because 'the karma follows the doer' *(ibid., 13.23)*. One has to reap the fruits of one's own action. Every action has to be realized, and thus annihilated. The fruits that are not matured will stick to the person till they are matured. This is the logic behind the whole

theory of the cycle of births and deaths *(karma samsara).* Jaina dharma, as a religion without a creator, redeemer God, places the entire *justification* on the individual, the doer and the enjoyer of the fruits of action. In this, even gods are not spared! This is very different from the Semitic view, where God plays a vital role in the lives of people and saves them.

(10) *Moksa* or *Nirvana* for the Jains is both immediate and eschatological: it is immediate in the sense that one can enjoy the fruits of complete annihilation of karma here and now. It is eschatological in the sense that the effort at annihilating karma is continued also in the future course of lives and events. In both ways Nirvana is final and complete.

Every religious system has a way of understanding life and environment. *Karma* is the central theme for understanding *dharma* in all Indian religions. Hence *karma-samsara* is part of India's cultural ethos. There could be, and there are reasons for focusing on karma in Indian situation. But the spiritual masters are aware of the freedom of the individual, the power of self-will and self-effort. Karma as a *logic of cause and effect* is not, therefore, entirely pessimistic. Those who are critical of karma do not see this logic. Self-determination and self-discipline too arise out of the same consciousness of karma (call for action) that once determined a person's life. All efforts are for the sake of achieving fresh results. Humanity's future rests on *New Karma* or selfless action.

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